

Malcolm Naden, Australia's Most-Wanted

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CHAPTER ONE:

Malcolm John Naden 05/11/1973 is of an Aboriginal appearance. Police said Malcolm Naden was armed, dangerous and should not be approached. Naden had been in hiding since June, 2005, and was wanted over murder and indecent assault offenses. In 2011 he was Australia's most wanted man, last seen [and usually seen] in the state of New South Wales. He was believed to be living rough in the bush around Barrington Tops, and other nearby areas.

Malcolm Naden was a skilled bush fugitive and had been eluding authorities since 2005, when he fled his grandparents' home in west Dubbo days after his cousin, 24-year-old mother-of-two Kristy Scholes, was found strangled in his bedroom.

Naden is also suspected of involvement in the disappearance a few months earlier of another of his cousin, Lateesha Nolan, and the rape of a 15-year-old schoolgirl.

[Alleged] double-murderer Malcolm Naden was said to be ready to shoot it out with police rather than be captured alive.

In June 2005, Naden disappeared from his grandparents' home in West Dubbo, days before 24-year-old Kristy Scholes was found strangled in a

bedroom of the home.

Prior to this incident, Naden was already named as a suspect in the disappearance of another one of his cousins, Lateesha Nolan, who had been reported missing in January 2005.

Kirsty Scholes,24, was a mother of two, found dead in a locked bedroom.

her personal details:

Last Seen: 22 June 2005

Year of Birth: 1981

Age: 24 [at death]

Height (cm): 165.0

Build: Medium

Hair Colour: Brown

Eye Colour: Green/Hazel

Complexion: Medium

Racial: Aboriginal

Circumstances: Police are investigating possible links between the murder of an Aboriginal woman in the NSW central west and the suspicious disappearance of a close relative.

The body of Kristy Scholes, 24, a mother of two, was found by police in a locked room at a West Dubbo home, after she was reported missing by a friend that afternoon.

Police found the body of Kristy Scholes, 24, inside a house in Bumblegumbie Road, Dubbo, in the early hours of the morning on Thursday 23 June.

Lateesha Nolan's Personal Details:

Last seen: Tuesday, 04 January 2005

Year of birth: 1980

Height: 165 cm

Build: Medium

Eyes: Green/Hazel

Hair: Brown

Complexion: Medium

Gender: Female

Circumstances: Lateesha has been missing since January 4th, 2005. She was last seen in Dubbo NSW. In June of 2005, Lateesha's friend Kristy Scholes was found murdered in the same house Lateesha was last seen in. Since that day, Lateesha's cousin Malcolm Naden had been also missing, and was for years the most wanted man in NSW.

The third victim is not identified, since at the time she was a fifteen-year-old schoolgirl who was allegedly sexually assaulted by Naden.

The fourth victim is the police officer who was shot in the shoulder, in December, 2011.

There have been numerous searches across bushland from the Barrington Tops to west of Kempsey in the six years since Mr Naden slipped a police-net outside Dubbo's Western Plains Zoo.

The suspected killer Malcolm Naden was costing the police budget hundreds of thousands of dollars a day as he refused to give himself up.

Tactical Operation Unit officers were asked to dress in camouflage gear, for their own safety.

By 2012, it was the largest police operation of its type, in the history of Australia.

Sydney Tactical Operation Unit officers were dressed in camouflage gear and armed with high-powered rifles, ... and State Protection Support unit officers from the northern and southern police regions also participated in the search.

At one point, police thought they had Naden, but still he vanished.

On Wednesday, 7 December 2011, inquiries led police to dense bushland near Nowendoc.

When specialist officers began moving in on a campsite, a shot was fired towards police, striking an officer in the shoulder. The injured officer received treatment at Newcastle's John Hunter Hospital and was later released to recover from his injuries.

Naden was accused of firing the gunshot.

At the campsite police located food, bedding and clothing while two firearms were located concealed in the vicinity of the campsite.

Strike Force Durkin, comprising detectives from the State Crime Command's Homicide Squad, was formed to investigate and establish the whereabouts of 38-year-old Malcolm Naden.

Operation Commander Assistant Commissioner Carlene York said information from the public is vital to the operation.

On Saturday, 24 December 2011, ballistics tests confirmed that the seized gun was used to shoot the police officer of Strike Force Durkin.

Naden's fingerprints or DNA had been confirmed at more than a dozen break-ins, although he was also suspected of scores of other similar burglaries.

The seizure of a third gun occurred on Wednesday 21 December 2011, when police responded to reports of a break-in at an unoccupied house on a rural property at Niangala, west of Nowendoc.

Once Again Naden Escaped The Police. Police attended the location and saw a man, believed to be Malcolm Naden, at the house. A tactical operation was mounted to secure the premises, and at about 7:30pm, a search was conducted inside the premises, however, the man was not located. He had vanished into thin air.

A .22-calibre rifle with scope was located at the premises and seized by police for forensic and ballistic testing. Subsequent tests had confirmed that the weapon was used to shoot the police officer on 7 December 2011.

Meanwhile, fingerprints located at the break-in at the Niangala property had been analysed and confirmed as belonging to Malcolm Naden.

Still the search continued for Malcolm Naden.

Where on earth could Malcolm Naden have been hiding?

Margaret's memories of Naden are inconsistent with his public profile, which pits him as a wild, dangerous man.

"The Malcolm we knew was nice," says Margaret. "He would never hurt anybody."

"...He used to read a lot. He used to read the Bible and go to Bible studies... but he wasn't the sort who would preach. "He was just very quiet."

She says he had a strong connection to his

grandparents, and would do anything to help them. He had lived with them since his mid-teens.

“He’d wash up for mum. He’d wipe up, clean the house, hang the clothes on the line. He wasn’t worried about what sort of job it was,” she recalls.

“He’d just do all of that.”

Not only was Naden quiet, but he was also painfully shy. He didn’t have many outside friends, but would hang around his male cousins, often visiting Margaret.

Malcolm John Naden: Was he a weird loner, a deviant killer, or both?

Malcolm’s Father who is in his 60’s still works as a shearer and has vast knowledge of the land, and of bush survival skills. This is a common skill that was passed down through the Naden family. Even Malcolm’s Grandfather Jack Nolan was a skilled bushman, and he was a hard worker, too. Born in the bush in 1927, he had toiled most of his 85 years, from horse-breaking to fencing, driving trucks, graders and bulldozers, picking fruit and construction. Even in retirement, Jack cut firewood for half “the mob” in West Dubbo, where he and Florence lived in the same neat house more than 40 years, until the day their grandson Malcolm destroyed their world.

On December 07, 2011, a police officer was been shot in a sniper attack, possibly carried out by New South

Wales' most wanted man, Malcolm Naden. On December 08, 2011, there was a shoot-out with police. The alleged killer, Malcolm Naden, obviously didn't intend to be taken alive [nor taken at all].

On December 09, 2011, the reward for accused murderer Malcolm Naden was more than doubled, to [Australian dollars] \$250,000 as the hunt for him in northern New South Wales entered its third day. On December 12, 2011, a fingerprint confirmed that it was fugitive Malcolm Naden who had used a campsite uncovered by police at Nowendoc in northern NSW. On December 22, 2011, police in New South Wales were alerted to a break-in at a rural property west of Nowendoc during the search for fugitive Malcolm Naden. On December 23, 2011, police confronted and spoke to Malcolm Naden at a property in northern NSW before the fugitive once again gave them the slip. How did he get away this time? Did he turn himself into a kangaroo and hop away unmolested? Most likely, the police had each promised their loved ones that they'd be home for Christmas, and didn't want to show-up under the family Christmas tree in a casket. That would have spoiled Christmas for the kids, I'm sure.

On December 24, 2011, a gun seized after a break-and-enter near Nowendoc had been confirmed as the firearm used to shoot a police officer earlier that month.

On December 27, 2011, New South Wales' most wanted

man, Malcolm Naden, is said to probably be surviving on raw kangaroo or wombat, according to the mayor of the region where he is believed to be hiding.

Presumably, Naden would have been afraid to light a cooking fire, because the police had stepped-up pressure on Malcolm Naden after investigating a break in at a property in Niangala on December 21.

On January 05, 2012, police had scaled back their hunt for Australia's most wanted fugitive after spending close to \$3 million on the search.

By 2012, a \$250,000 [Aussie dollars] reward was being offered for information leading to his capture. Anyone with information was told to contact Crime Stoppers at 1800 333 000.

CHAPTER TWO:

June 2005 - Malcolm Naden disappeared after the body of Kristy Scholes, the partner of his cousin, was found in the bedroom of his family's home in Dubbo.

December 2005 - Police temporarily closed Dubbo's Western Plains Zoo after Naden was spotted there. Naden evaded capture after a huge police operation before Christmas. Police said they believed he was surviving by eating fruit, stolen food and perhaps being helped by contacts.

January 2006 - Naden's relatives begged him to hand himself in to police, after sightings in Moree, Coonabarabran and Coonamble. The only two confirmed sightings were at Grawin, near Lightning Ridge, and at Western Plains Zoo.

March 2006 - Naden again avoided capture after a team of about 60 police, accompanied by dogs and a helicopter, searched for him at the Willow Bend Village Aboriginal mission in Condobolin.

Naden broke into isolated homes to gain supplies before returning to almost inaccessible bushland, playing a game of cat and mouse with frustrated police. He was spotted on the run in December, 2006, when police again found evidence he had been living in the animal enclosures in Western Plains Zoo, Dubbo,

stealing meat and fruit left out for the animals. Police also found carefully butchered kangaroo carcasses, according to a report in the Herald Sun newspaper.

January 2007 - Police announced a \$50,000 reward for Naden's arrest, different from rewards usually paid upon the conviction of a wanted criminal. It was the first such bounty offered since the hunt for the Kelly gang after a string of murders and robberies in 1878.

January 2009 - Naden thought to be behind several break-ins in Bellbrook, inland from Kempsey in northern NSW, in which non-perishable food, torches, camping gear, warm clothes, raincoats and binoculars were stolen, while valuables were left behind.

August 2010 - Naden was believed to be armed and living in dense bushland near Curricabark, northwest of Gloucester, after reports of thefts from properties near the Woko National Park. One resident reported his .22 calibre rifle stolen.

September 2010 - Police confirmed Naden's DNA profile matched blood found at the scene of a break-in at Stewarts Brook, 50 kilometres east of Scone, in early 2008, the Newcastle Herald reported.

Bounty hunters arrived at Barrington Tops in the hunt for Naden.

October 2010 - A pig hunter told the Newcastle Herald he came across one of Naden's bush camps in

Barrington Tops.

February 2011 - Police upped the bounty on Naden's head to \$100,000.

December, 2011 - Naden allegedly shot a 33-year-old police officer in the shoulder as searchers closed in on him at a remote camp site near Nowendoc, before he again evaded capture.

- The price on Naden's head went up to \$250,000 [Aussie dollars].

January 2012 - Strike Force Durkin's headquarters moved from Nowendoc to Gloucester.

March 22, 2012 - Police captured Malcolm Naden in rugged bushland west of Gloucester just after midnight.

The Westplains zoo offers African Safari conditions, with 300+ hectares of bushland and with many animals roaming across the wide open spaces.

there are big cats [ie. lions, leopards, etc], Black Rhinoceros, Hippopotamus, Giraffes, Zebra, African Elephants, Siamang Ape and many more

You can take your Safari on foot, by car, bike or electric cart. Bikes and electric carts are available for hire.

To enhance your zoo visit you can add on and book some of the incredible up-close Animal Encounter experiences. Wild Africa Encounter, Big Cat Encounter, Giraffes in Focus (Mar - Nov), Early Morning Lodge,

Sleepover at the Zoo. The animals are normally more active in the mornings - during feeding times and keeper activities. Picnic grounds are throughout the zoo. Free gas BBQ's are at the major picnic grounds and near the children's playground.

Malcolm John Naden is no Ned Kelly. But the 32-year-old bushman from Dubbo, who has eluded statewide police dragnets over the murder of his cousin and the disappearance of another woman, has joined the infamous ranks of the 19th century bushrangers with the issue of a bounty for his arrest.

The \$50,000 reward announced 1/3/07 by NSW Police Minister John Watkins, differed from other government rewards for information on the whereabouts of a fugitive, which are paid only upon their conviction.

Police said it was the first such bounty issued since the hunt for the Kelly gang over a string of robberies and murders, including three police at Stringybark Creek, Victoria, in 1878 when the bounty was set at £8000. In fact, the last bounty was issued in 1900 — £1000 for the arrest of the former police tracker Jimmy Governor, made famous by the film *The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith*.

NSW homicide squad head, Detective Superintendent Geoff Beresford said Naden had slipped through intensive police stake-outs in the central west and mid-north coast — the last six weeks earlier when he was sighted in Coffs Harbour.

Police have previously searched the Western Plains Zoo and at one stage staked out a disused dinosaur park near Dubbo, believing he was camped out in the belly of one of the giant model creatures.

Superintendent Beresford said Naden was wanted for the murder of his cousin, mother of two Kristy Scholes, 24, who was found strangled in Naden's home in West Dubbo.

The unemployed shearer, a former skinner and boner at Dubbo abattoir [slaughterhouse], and a talented artist, had been on the run since. Police wanted to question him over the disappearance of another cousin, Lateesha Nolan, 24, who was last seen in January, 2005.

Superintendent Beresford said Naden was also wanted for an alleged 'sexual assault of a child', a fifteen-year-old schoolgirl.

Describing the issuing of the bounty as an "unusual appeal", Mr Watkins said: "Six young children have been left without their mothers.

"The man has expert bushcraft skills but police are convinced he is being assisted by members of the community. I urge the community to shed any misguided loyalties they may have for Malcolm John Naden and assist police in catching him."

Superintendent Beresford said he did not believe the bounty would turn Naden into a folk hero such as Ned

Kelly.

"We have considered that (and) that's why I would like to reiterate that this person is considered dangerous. Ned Kelly was also a murderer, and no fame should be attached to Naden at all. He is a dangerous criminal and he needs to be apprehended as soon as possible.

"He should be approached with the utmost caution if anyone happens to see him. If anyone does see him we urge them to ring triple 0 immediately."

Superintendent Beresford said the bounty was not an invitation for civilian bounty hunters to take the law into their own hands.

"That is something that only lives in cowboy movies and fables. It does not have any place in this investigation."

In 2007, police said they were still receiving weekly reports of sightings of wanted man Malcolm Naden from Dubbo in central western New South Wales.

As part of Missing Persons Week, police had renewed their appeal for information and said a \$50,000 reward is still on offer.

Nicole Morris from the Australian Missing Persons Register says someone must know his whereabouts.

"It's very frustrating to think that there are people out there who are hiding him, and what loyalty could they be thinking about while they've got him hidden away,

that they could put some sort of friendship, loyalty or family loyalty above justice for this young mother who's missing," she said.

Ms Morris says the stress is taking its toll on Lateesha Nolan's family, in particular her father Mick Peet.

"He has been really unwell, he has been in and out of hospital with heart problems and other problems, he's undergoing tests," she said.

"He's had operations, he's due for another one ... I think, the stress of the whole situation is literally eating him up, there's just no end, no relief to the suffering for him."

CHAPTER THREE:

The high country of the NSW Northern Tablelands makes an atmospheric setting for a manhunt. At 1000m or more above sea level, clouds hug the forested upper flanks of the Great Dividing Range and the air in the valleys below is so still that the cry of birds or the distant rumble of logging trucks can be heard for several kilometres.

As the light fades in the late afternoon, a cool wind swathes the farmlands in pale mist. Perhaps it's no surprise that the locals are prone to romantic myth-making when they talk about Australia's most wanted man, Malcolm John Naden, the armed fugitive who has been on the run here and elsewhere in the state for nearly seven years.

Nowendoc National Park is a park on the southern end of the Northern Tablelands and west of Nowendoc, New South Wales, Australia. It is located approximately 70 km south of Walcha and about 375 km north of Sydney.

The park is in the rugged escarpment terrain with eucalypt forests dominating the region, along with some rainforest along creeks. This park includes parts of the Myall and Callaghans Creeks which form part of the headwaters of the Barnard River.

All access roads to the park have a gravel surface, winding and steep in places and are unsuitable for caravans ['car-trailers' in American English, that is]. The park is in two sections. The largest section can be reached from north-west of Nowendoc to visit the Myall Creek Camp Ground or view Callaghans Canyon. The south-eastern section with Wrights Hut is only accessible by a Four-wheel drive (4WD) and obtaining a key from the National Parks and Wildlife Service for the locked gate on the trail south of Nowendoc. The smaller, separate forested section is located on Millers Road.

There is a small, very basic camping area situated in a tall eucalyptus forest beside Myall Creek with a wood-fired pit barbecue, but no other facilities. This and the Wrights Hut section area are accessible in dry weather with a 4WD. Self-reliant bushwalkers can explore local scenic waterfalls and rainforest. Further afield from the campground there are scenic canyons, waterfalls and heritage places.

Barrington Tops is a twenty-five-kilometre long plateau extending between a series of extinct volcanic peaks in the Mount Royal Ranges, an easterly offshoot of the Great Escarpment. Eighty kilometres west of surf and sand, as the black cockatoo flies, one-and-a-half kilometre high mountains rise to swirling mists. On a plateau stretched between their summits, alpine meadows awash with fragile wildflowers in springtime spread out beneath snowgums' open boughs. Melted

snow becomes lithe white water dancing down to the sea through ancient beech forests bathed in an ethereal green light. Pure clear water flows from sphagnum moss swamps that retain and slowly release great quantities of water from the plateau, fed by mists, melting snow and an annual rainfall exceeding fifteen hundred millimetres [sixty inches].

More than twenty valleys radiate from the hub of the plateau. Wild rivers become waterfalls plunging from great heights into fern-lined gorges. In the river valleys of the lowlands, weathered basalt washed down from the mountains forms rich alluvial soils. Rainforest in Barrington Tops National Park is the southernmost link in a chain of remnant rainforests in central Eastern Australia protected by World Heritage listing.

'Antarctic' beech forests cloaking the slopes above the nine-hundred-metre mark are a living link with the supercontinent of Gondwanaland, where they evolved sixty-six million years ago. Pollen of the genus *Nothofagus* dates back to the Late Cretaceous period, when Australia was still part of Gondwanaland. It is believed the genus evolved after links between Africa and South America were severed. Today, it is found in the mountains of New Guinea, New Caledonia, New Zealand and southern South America and relic rainforest in Tasmania. *Nothofagus* is the southern hemisphere's representative of the European beech.

The first stage of the Barrington Tops National Park was dedicated in 1969 with additions being made in 1982.

The park gained World Heritage Listing in 1986 and, more recently, much of the area has been declared Wilderness. The pure quality of their water and their special aesthetic beauty have enabled Boonabilla Creek and the Paterson, Williams, Chichester and Wangat rivers to be classified as Wild Rivers. Fantastic views of forested wilderness unfold from the highest peaks. On a clear day from Carey's Peak, at an elevation of 1545 metres, the white sands of Stockton Beach may be visible as a distant fine line above the rolling, agricultural, green valley of the Williams River, scooped out in a blue-green wilderness of forest. At Mount Barrington, at 1556 metres, a view to the western slopes of the Tops overlooks grazing land towards Scone in the Hunter River Valley.

While reaching up to meet enveloping mists, Antarctic Beech trees tower over an understory of treeferns.

At the Laurie Lookout in Gloucester Tops, it is possible to see distinct changes in forest types. Rising from the valley floor, warm-temperate rainforest species merge with wet eucalypt forest up the slopes. Where the slope retains little water, dry eucalypts thrive. Adjacent to the subalpine swamp communities and woodlands, grassy summits known as 'grassland balds' cap the summits.

The impressive array of habitats found in the Barrington Tops nurtures half of the plant species found in Australia and over one-third of its mammals and birds. A high concentration of gliders and owls, including the

barking owl, which emits a blood-curdling human-like scream while hunting at night, nest in hollows in eucalypt forest that has never been logged, saved by the rugged nature of the terrain. The powerful, masked and sooty owls, however, join twenty-three other animals on the endangered list, including the tiger quoll, the red-legged pademelon, yellow-bellied glider, koala, broad-toothed rat and sphagnum frog. One of Australia's rarest birds, the tiny and elusive rufous scrub bird, may be heard singing a loud melodious song while foraging on the forest floor adjoining beech forest.

Barrington Tops is home to the magnificent iridescent blue-green paradise riflebird, which belongs to the birds of paradise family, often considered the most beautiful birds in the world. Sometimes this bird can be heard tearing rotten wood, in pursuit of insects, with his strong curved beak. The paradise riflebird decorates his cup-shaped nest with cast-off snakes' skins, probably the skins of diamond pythons and green tree snakes, reptiles which share his moist forest habitat in wet eucalypt and temperate rainforest.

Farther west, and dryer, the State Forests of The Pilliga, commonly known as the Pilliga Scrub, constitute some 3000 km² of semi-arid woodland in temperate north-central New South Wales, Australia. It is the largest such continuous remnant in the state.

Author Eric Rolls wrote a seminal work on the Pilliga

called *A Million Wild Acres*, which gives an insight into the history of the region. One of Rolls' most-cited conclusions is that the forest used to be an open woodland forest and that European influence has enabled the cypress pine to dominate. However, many scientific authors now disagree with much of Rolls' analysis, quoting historical records from as early as the 1870s which suggest that the plant communities in the scrub have not undergone the level of alteration that Rolls suggests. However most of his history of the region is uncontested and his book remains an invaluable document for understanding the region.

The geology of the area is dominated by Pilliga sandstone, a coarse red to yellow Jurassic sandstone containing about 75% quartz, 15% plagioclase and 10% iron oxide, although local variations in soil type do occur. Sandstone outcrops with basalt-capped ridges are common in the south, while the Pilliga outwash areas in the north and west are dominated by alluvium from flooding creeks. Gilgais occur in some areas. In the west "sand monkeys" (abandoned creek beds) are common. In the east is a heavily eroded sandstone mountain range, visible in outcrops such as those around Gin's Leap between Baan Baa and Boggabri.

The forest contains at least 900 plant species, including some now widely grown in cultivation as well as many threatened species. Some areas of the forest, particularly in the western Pilliga, are dominated by cypress-pine (*Callitris* spp.). However there are a variety

of distinct plant communities in the forest, some of which do not include *Callitris*. Another prominent sub-canopy genus are the she-oaks, while eucalypts dominate the canopy throughout the forest.

Fauna recorded from the Pilliga Nature Reserve include at least 36 native and nine introduced mammals, 50 reptiles and at least 15 frogs. Squirrel Gliders, Koalas, Rufous Bettongs and Pilliga Mice are present.

A 4909 km² tract of land, including the forest and the nearby Warrumbungle National Park, has been identified by BirdLife International as an Important Bird Area (IBA) because it supports populations of Painted Honeyeaters and Diamond Firetails. It also experiences irregular occurrences of endangered Swift Parrots and Regent Honeyeaters, and near threatened Bush Stone-curlews. Other declining woodland birds present in good numbers include Barking Owls, Glossy Black-Cockatoos, Grey-crowned Babblers, Speckled Warblers, Brown Treecreepers, Hooded Robins and Turquoise Parrots.

Fire plays a major role in the ecology of the forest with many plant species depending on fire to regenerate. However in unfavorable conditions fire can be extremely intense, spread very quickly and threaten nearby properties as well as laying waste to entire ecosystems. If intense fires occur less than 15 years apart there can be a loss of plant and animal biodiversity. The magnitude of historical Pilliga

bushfires correlates extremely well with the El Nino Southern Oscillation phenomena, with El Nino (dry) years having the most severe fires.

In 1997 a major fire burned close to 1,435 km² of the forest. An extremely dry winter and spring in 2006 saw a number of large fires develop, including the Pilliga 4 Fire in November/December which burned out 740 km² on just its first day.

Towns in the area include Narrabri, Pilliga, Gwabegar, Baradine, Coonabarabran, Boggabri and Baan Baa. There is an extensive network of roads throughout the scrub, many of which are former forestry roads. The forest once supported a large forestry industry in the surrounding towns (harvesting mostly cypress pine and ironbarks) however this has been greatly scaled back since 2005 when much of the forest was set aside for environmental conservation by the NSW government.

There are many attractions in the forest, including:

Salt caves: shallow sandstone caves in the middle of the Pilliga

Dandry Creek Gorge: sandstone cliff toward the south of the Pilliga

Pilliga Pottery: off the highway north of Coonabarabran

Bird-watching: many species of birds occur in the forest; the Baradine Visitor's Centre has information leaflets.

Walcha is situated some 420km from Sydney via Thunderbolt's Way through Gloucester, and 523 km via Tamworth and the New England Highway.

The natural beauty of the Shire is quite breathtaking. The Shire is home to the magnificent Macleay Gorges and boasts some 205,000 hectares of dedicated national parks, wilderness and state forest. Parts of our Werrikimbe National Park are World Heritage listed.

The Shire is also a well known trout fishing mecca, boasting some 1,500 km of trout streams which are a home to Rainbow and Brown trout.

The township of Walcha is 1,067 metres above sea level, with the highest point in the district being at "The Flags" (42 kilometres south of Walcha) which is 1,493 metres above sea level. The Shire covers an area of 640,028 hectares (2,475 square miles).

The Walcha district today is a significant primary producing area. It is one of the largest stock carrying areas in New South Wales. The Shire has long been known as a producer of high quality native hardwoods and its importance as a softwood producing area is increasing. It is renowned as one of the best fine wool growing areas in the world.

Walcha is one of the largest stock carrying areas in Australia with sheep and cattle populations of 804,419

and 157,501 respectively (31st March 1999 statistical information). The gross value of agricultural products produced in the Shire during that period was \$40.687 million.

New South Wales is bordered on the north by Queensland, on the west by South Australia, on the south by Victoria and on the east by the Tasman Sea. The Australian Capital Territory and the Jervis Bay Territory are Federal enclaves of New South Wales. The state can be divided geographically into four areas. New South Wales' three largest cities, Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, lie near the centre of a narrow coastal strip extending from cool temperate areas on the far south coast to subtropical areas near the Queensland border.

The Illawarra region is centred on the city of Wollongong, with the Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla and the Sapphire Coast to the south. The Central Coast lies between Sydney and Newcastle, with the Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers regions reaching northwards to the Queensland border. Tourism is important to the economies of coastal towns such as Coffs Harbour, Lismore, Nowra and Port Macquarie, but the region also produces seafood, beef, dairy, fruit, sugar cane and timber.

The Great Dividing Range extends from Victoria in the south through New South Wales to Queensland, parallel

to the narrow coastal plain. This area includes the Snowy Mountains, the Northern, Central and Southern Tablelands, the Southern Highlands and the South West Slopes. Whilst not particularly steep, many peaks of the range rise above 1,000 metres (3,281 ft), with the highest Mount Kosciuszko at 2,229 m (7,313 ft). Skiing in Australia began in this region at Kiandra around 1861. The relatively short ski season underwrites the tourist industry in the Snowy Mountains. Agriculture, particularly the wool industry, is important throughout the highlands. Major centres include Armidale, Bathurst, Bowral, Goulburn, Inverell, Orange, Queanbeyan and Tamworth.

There are numerous forests in New South Wales, with such tree species as Red Gum Eucalyptus and Crow Ash (*Flindersia australis*), being represented.[29] Forest floors have a diverse set of understory shrubs and fungi. One of the widespread fungi is Witch's Butter (*Tremella mesenterica*).

The western slopes and plains fill a significant portion of the state's area and have a much sparser population than areas nearer the coast. Agriculture is central to the economy of the western slopes, particularly the Riverina region and Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area in the state's south-west. Regional cities such as Albury, Dubbo, Griffith and Wagga Wagga and towns such as Deniliquin, Leeton and Parkes exist primarily to service these agricultural regions. The western slopes descend slowly to the western plains that comprise almost two-

thirds of the state and are largely arid or semi-arid. The mining town of Broken Hill is the largest centre in this area.

One possible definition of the centre for New South Wales is located 33 kilometres (21 mi) west-north-west of Tottenham.

Most of New South Wales has an arid or semi arid climate. However, the eastern portion has a temperate climate. The Snowy Mountains region in the south-east falls in the alpine climate/highland climate zone, with cool to cold weather all year around and snowfalls in the winter.

The highest maximum temperature recorded was 49.7 °C (121 °F) at Menindee in the state's west on 10 January 1939. The lowest minimum temperature was −23 °C (−9 °F) at Charlotte Pass in the Snowy Mountains on 29 June 1994. This is also the lowest temperature recorded in the whole of Australia excluding the Antarctic Territory.

One of the earliest stake-outs to catch Naden occurred in late 2006, in Coff's Harbour. Coffs Harbour is a coastal city located on the north coast of New South Wales about 540 km (340 mi) north of Sydney, 385 km (239 mi) north of Newcastle, and 440 km (270 mi) south of Brisbane. The region has a wintertime population of over 70,000 people that swells to 100,000 in the holiday

seasons. Popular with people wanting to relocate from big cities to small towns on the coast or in rural areas, Coffs Harbour continues to grow at an exceptional rate, with a population projection of 80,000 by the year 2016.

According to the CSIRO, Coffs Harbour has the most liveable climate in Australia, and it is nestled between a high mountain backdrop and dozens of "unspoiled" beaches. Coffs Harbour's economy is based mainly on farming (of bananas), tourism, and manufacturing.

The city has a campus of Southern Cross University, a public and a private hospital, several radio stations, and three major shopping centres. Coffs Harbour is near numerous National Parks, including a Marine National Park. There are multiple regular passenger flights each day to Sydney, Brisbane and Port Macquarie. Coffs Harbour is also accessible by road, by Countrylink trains, and by regular bus services.

CHAPTER FOUR:

Holding razor sharp shearing blades, the brother and father of Malcolm Naden demonstrated the kind of bush skills that have helped the fugitive evade police for years.

Like his brother Jason, Naden was taught at a young age by their father Richard how to survive in the bush, The Daily Telegraph reported.

A photo showed Jason and Richard Naden as they appeared in the ABC series Outback House, in which a real family lived like 1861 pioneers at Oxley Downs about 36km south of Dubbo. The ABC series was filmed shortly before any of Malcolm's alleged crimes occurred.

They were chosen for the show because they were one of a disappearing breed of country people who still knew how to shear sheep with the old-fashioned blade shears used in the 19th century.

Just months after the end of filming in late 2004, Malcolm Naden was on the run after the murder of a cousin, Kristy Scholes, and the disappearance and suspected murder of another cousin, Lateesha Nolan.

The executive producer of Outback House, Ivo Burum, said: "We used real shearers from the area. They were very experienced and had to be able to use blade shearers."

A family member said Richard Naden was a "gun shearer" who had taught Malcolm to use blade shears before he left home as a young teenager after repeated clashes with his father.

The closest police have come to capturing Naden was in December, 2011, at his bush camp outside Nowendoc, east of Tamworth. As officers settled in for the long haul, establishing a tent city next to Nowendoc Memorial Hall, they revealed Naden had made his home in a remote bushwalker's rest, Christie's Hut, in the middle of Nowendoc National Park for lengths of time.

Police also confirmed they found a fingerprint belonging to Naden at a campsite he was staying at when he fired a single shot, hitting a 33-year-old special protection group officer.

The government had put a \$250,000 bounty on his head, the first time a reward for information leading to the arrest rather than a conviction has been offered since the time of Ned Kelly.

Again in March 2012, Australian police stepped up their hunt for the fugitive, Malcolm Naden, who had been on the run since 2005 after allegedly killing a woman.

A reward of A\$100,000 (\$103,000; £66,000) had been offered earlier. It was the first time such a big bounty had been used in Australia since the days of outlaw Ned Kelly in the 1850s.

In December of 2011, a police officer was shot in the shoulder when a search team surrounded what was believed to be Mr Naden's makeshift camp site near the village of Nowendoc. The suspect managed to escape, prompting the authorities to scale up the hunt.

After that, teams of heavily armed police in camouflage clothing were scouring the woodland around the village. They were being assisted in the search by the Australian military.

He was the most wanted man in the state of New South Wales, and later, in all of Australia.

The police had mounted seven major operations to find him, but Mr Naden had always managed to somehow escape. What was his secret? Was he a shape-shifter?

The latest searches had been hampered by rain and fog.

"You can imagine the frustration of those trained officers that are out there in those conditions right now," the New South Wales Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC).

"Mr Naden is in that area, we are certain that he's not that far from where we last encountered him."

New South Wales Police had released a new digitally-enhanced photograph of how they believed Mr Naden looked after seven years 'walkabout'.

He appears thinner than in previous images the police have released, with a beard and much more hair. 'Shocking'. The suspect is believed to have been hiding for some of the time in Barrington Tops National Park, a huge thickly-forested wilderness area containing a series of extinct volcanoes.

The police had appealed to bushwalkers and tourists in the area to come forward with information about any possible sightings of Mr Naden. Residents in the area are being told to ensure that their homes are secure and not to approach the suspect under any circumstances.

Mick Peet, the father of Lateesha Nolan, said the latest developments had come as a shock.

"I'm just a bit upset that it has taken a police officer to be shot to get this highlighted to where I wanted it. I just want him caught alive," he told ABC. The injured police officer had been released from hospital.

Police teams with camping equipment were spending the night in the bush continuing the search. Helicopters have also been involved in the search.

NSW's most wanted man, Malcolm Naden, had come to be armed with a semi-automatic rifle, police say. The

fugitive, who held the record for being on the run from authorities for the longest time since 1860s bushranger Captain Thunderbolt held the record, stole the gun from a property in the state's northern regions of Gloucester and Nowendoc.

Police warned the public that Malcolm Naden, wanted for an alleged murder at Dubbo and the alleged attempted murder of a police officer at Nowendoc, is an extremely dangerous man. Residents in the area have been told to steer well clear of him if he is seen. NSW Police Assistant Commissioner, Carlene York, who headed the massive manhunt, had also urged gun owners to ensure all weapons and ammunition are safely secured in line with the law. "Investigations by Strike Force Durkin have revealed Malcolm Naden is in possession of firearms, including a .22 calibre semi-automatic rifle, and ammunition.

"This is most concerning as we are aware of Naden's violent nature and his willingness to use firearms to avoid apprehension," Assistant Commissioner York said. Police said the rifle was stolen recently from a property with other food items and clothing. "Strike Force investigators will evaluate the information we receive and respond accordingly.

"We are committed to locating this violent offender and the release of this new information, although concerning, reinforces our intentions to protect the community," Assistant Commissioner York said.

CHAPTER FIVE:

Australia's most wanted fugitive — a survival expert and suspected murderer who outwitted police for seven years by living in rugged forest — was finally captured in a remote cabin on Thursday, March 22, 2012.

In early March of 2012, fugitive Malcolm Naden was believed to have obtained a semi-automatic firearm, and police were warning locals to avoid him at all costs.

The search for the accused murderer, on the run since 2005, was stepped up in early December when police were shot at near the village of Nowendoc in mid-northern NSW.

Malcolm Naden, whose ability to evade police evoked comparisons to famous 19th century Australian outlaw Ned Kelly, had been on the run since disappearing in June 2005 from his grandparents' home.

He went missing days before mother-of-two Kristy Scholes, 24, was found strangled in his bedroom, and he was also wanted for questioning over the indecent assault of a 15-year-old girl and the disappearance of his 24-year-old cousin.

When he appeared in court, the 38-year-old was charged with Scholes' murder, two counts of aggravated

indecent assault on the teenage girl, and the attempted killing of a police officer.

"He's in reasonable health but he's very tired," his lawyer Michael Jones said after Naden was refused bail and the case adjourned until April 24, 2012.

"He's got serious bite marks on both legs inflicted by police dogs at the time of his arrest. Other than that, that's all I can say."

Naden was arrested just after midnight when officers swooped in on a private property near Gloucester in the hinterland of New South Wales State's north coast following a tip that he was there. No shots were fired in the raid.

The 38-year-old outlaw, whose ability to evade a massive police manhunt and live off his bushcraft skills earned him an almost mythic status in Australia, was captured in a midnight police raid in northern New South Wales. The Government claimed the bounty over his head – \$250,000 (£163,000) – was the largest since the days of Ned Kelly in the 19th century.

Naden, 38, a former abattoir[slaughterhouse] worker, appeared briefly in court with no shoes, a shaved head and a thick bushy beard to face charges over the murder of a 24-year-old, Kristy Scholes, who was found strangled in his locked bedroom in Dubbo in 2005. He also faced two counts of sexual assault against a 15-year-old-girl, and the shooting of a police officer who

closed in on one of his makeshifts camp in December of 2011. He apparently did not apply for bail.

Despite the horrific crimes for which he was wanted, Naden earned a grudging respect for his survival skills. But his years on the run were a constant embarrassment for the state's police and prompted constant reminders that he is "no Robin Hood".

Naden, who was armed when police confronted him on Wednesday night, was found at a holiday house and surrounded by 20 officers and a dog squad. He was reportedly confronted at the front door and then rushed inside to try to escape. During the raid, he was bitten by a dog and received injuries to his face, wrist and ankles.

'Chuck' is the Police Dog who assisted in the capture of Malcolm Naden.

Australia's most wanted man was captured holed-up in a lonely mountain cabin on Thursday after seven years on the run during which time he lived in rugged wilderness often like an animal. Malcolm Naden, an Aboriginal bush survival expert and murder suspect, had been compared with Australia's most famous 19th century bushranger Ned Kelly for his ability to elude police, at one stage narrowly escaping after shootout at a farmhouse.

Naden, 38, often broke into empty, isolated farmhouses to gain supplies before returning to inaccessible

bushland, but in the early hours of Thursday [3/22/2012] the cat and mouse game ended when police surrounded a house in the rugged Barrington Tops a few hours drive north of Sydney.

Despite being surrounded by heavily armed police Naden made a dash to escape, but was brought down by a police dog which dragged him to the ground by his leg.

"Today Australia's most wanted man was behind bars," New South Wales (NSW) Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione told reporters in Sydney.

Photographs of the capture Naden showed him sitting under a tree, hands and legs handcuffed, wet and covered in mud, his legs bandaged and sporting a long beard, reminiscent of Australia's bushrangers or outlaws.

During his time on the run Naden hid in a zoo for several weeks where he stole meat and rotting fruit left out for the animals. Naden spent so long in the bush that it became difficult for police dogs to pick up his scent.

At times police missed capturing Naden by only hours. Finally, a tip-off led 20 police to an isolated farmhouse which Naden had used before.

"That was something that was quite common to his movements, that he was often going back to the same

residence where he'd done break-and-enters over a period of years, often using similar tracks that we thought he was travelling along," said a police assistant commissioner Carlene York.

"I am very pleased to be able to confirm for you today that Australia's most wanted man is behind bars," New South Wales Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione told reporters.

Assistant Commissioner Carlene York, the commander of the strike force set up to capture him, said she never doubted the operation would succeed.

"Our people were operating in extremely difficult conditions and we had to adapt our strategies along the way," York said, as pictures showed Naden with a shaved head, wild beard, shackled, handcuffed and covered in mud.

"However, we always understood that every day brought us closer and that our tactics would prevail."

Naden previously worked as a shearer, skinner and boner in an abattoir and has been described as a "master bushman" with an intimate knowledge of the rugged terrain in which he was hiding.

According to earlier reports, before he disappeared, he lived behind a locked bedroom door where he read the Bible, encyclopaedias and survival manuals.

Other reports said he often set up crude but sturdy

camps on hilltops, giving him the widest possible field of vision, and survived on whatever the bush provided, while breaking into remote homes to steal weapons and supplies.

His exploits drew parallels with Kelly, Australia's most famous bushranger whose life was made into several films. Kelly was seen as a working-class hero despite murdering three police officers.

The father of Naden's missing cousin Lateesha Nolan told ABC radio he hoped the arrest would shed light on what happened to his daughter.

"I sort of felt like falling to the ground on my knees, I didn't know what to say," Mick Peet said about hearing the news of Naden's capture.

"I'm just glad we're on the road to some kind of recovery to find out what happened to my daughter and some closure."

An uncle of Scholes said the family were overcome by the developments.

"Overwhelmed, I'm just so shocked, we didn't expect it," Tony Scholes told the Seven Network.

The fugitive was tough, but no ace bushman, wrote David Humphries and Rory Callinan. Seven years is more than enough time for a legend to flourish. enough time for leaden chatter, speculation and big-noting across fence and bar-room to transmute to gospel gold.

The lack of exposure to the wilderness, and the shortage of bush-experience by city-gossipers, fueled the conviction that only a superman could survive the Australian bush while on the lam.

So it will be with Malcolm John Naden, until yesterday Australia's most pursued fugitive, an evader of the police-net because - in the public mind - he was daring, resourceful, fit and, above all, a master bushman mystically blessed in survival skills by his aboriginality.

That his honing of bush skills - before he fled police in 2005 after a cousin was found strangled in the family home - was limited to occasional camping trips around Dubbo, according to family, did nothing to dent the myth.

"Many locals got a buzz out of the police and media attention because many came not to fear Naden, because he avoided human contact". He is tough, to be sure, a black belt in karate, and was determined to preserve his liberty, even at the cost of allegedly shooting a policeman sent to trap him. He is a skilled knifeman, having worked at a Dubbo meatworks and, like many in his family, was not work-shy in his youth.

His so-called 'religious' fervour helped him maintain a single-mindedness, and the terrain of the northern tablelands made the manhunt a haystack search for a needle. Police were advantaged by a massive budget and a pervasive presence but constrained by the need to plan every move with an eye to officers' safety.

These characteristics served him well on the run. But another element proved his trump. "Another element proved his trump. Naden was a loner".

Naden was a loner. His reclusive behaviour was evident before police went after him at Dubbo. He locked himself in his room at his grandparents' house, clambered around the ceiling space and spied on family members through holes in the plaster, and distanced himself from the grandfather he loved and trusted to the point where his meals were left outside his door.

The requirement that brings most fugitives undone - the need for human contact, for the assurances of family and friends - was not in Naden's make-up. It was as if his bizarre separation at Dubbo, when he blanketed out sunshine from his room and refused the pleas of family to socialize, was preparation for the years ahead. Without the need of social contact, Naden could hole up in one of many hiding spots around the tableland wilderness.

It required discipline and caution, to be sure, but he could sneak about without much fear of apprehension, stealing what he needed from mostly unoccupied residences, having the occasional beer and perusing internet pornography.

Many locals got a buzz out of the police and media attention because many came not to fear Naden because he avoided human contact. That reality fostered the Naden mythology. The scuttlebutt is that

he is a decorated soldier - but he was never in the military. He is also said to have evaded Aboriginal trackers and bounty hunters chasing the \$250,000 reward for his capture. But the former weren't employed by police and there's no record of the latter. He's said to have slept in the lions' enclosure at the Western Plains Zoo at Dubbo after he fled police, but in fact stayed in a different building at the site. And so on, and so on. Naden was a child of one of the state's more notorious housing complexes - the Gordon estate, about 250 housing commission homes on Dubbo's outskirts. Most residents were Aboriginal but the misbehaviour that made Dubbo one of the top five crime areas in NSW in 2005 - the year Naden went on the run - did not involve the immediate family of Naden's grandparents, Florence and Jack Nolan, who attended the Seventh Day Adventist Church. His father Richard, from Gilgandra, did not drink alcohol and worked hard as a shearer, followed into the sheds by his two sons.

But something went wrong in the Naden household and Malcolm left when he was a teenager, finally moving in with his maternal grandparents.

Despite the backdrop, Naden initially had a reputation as a good worker. "He was a hard worker but strange," says a former employer. But he lost his driver's licence as the result of drunk-driving and, by the end of the 1990s, worked only odd labouring jobs. He embraced karate and began obsessing about the Bible.

CHAPTER SIX:

Australia's most wanted man has been captured, but not everyone is glad to see the back of Malcolm Naden and the specialist police officers searching for him.

Since the start of the year, dozens of officers have been based at Gloucester, a 5000-strong town in the upper Hunter, as they searched for the 38-year-old former abattoir worker.

Gary Daley, a publican at the Avon Valley Inn, said Mr Naden's presence in the region had "put Gloucester on the map" and it had been as "busy as Times-Square on a New-Year's Eve".

"We get people in here - from everywhere - coming up to see the town," he told reporters.

There had clearly been an increase in beer and coffee sales.

Mr Daley said beer sales at his pub increased about 15 to 20 per cent, with police officers dropping by for a drink after work. Butcher Darrel Wisemantel said while people were happy about Mr Naden's arrest, some residents had mixed feelings. "The police were injecting some dollars into the economy, you know. That's probably going to scale down to a skeleton staff now

and things will carry on as normal."

Sarah Grono, from the nearby Roadies Cafe, said the police presence boosted her coffee sales - and the officers became friends with the locals. "We were only just saying we'll miss that," Ms Grono said.

"They come here early in the morning, from about 7.30am to 9am. You generally get one group - who do the rounds for the rest of them."

The mayor of Gloucester Shire Council, Geoff Slack, said police had become "part of the community", but that residents were "very pleased" about Mr Naden's capture.

"It's been in the back of everybody's mind that someone is in the area that maybe is not a nice person," he said.

Naden's presence 'bad for tourism'?

Debbie Brunjes, the manager of Gloucester Holiday Park, which has 104 caravan sites and 16 cabins, said Mr Naden's presence in the area discouraged tourists from visiting.

"[Our bookings] dropped off considerably," Ms Brunjes said, adding that revenue had fallen about 25 per cent. The summer months were usually the busiest season, but, this year, only three-quarters of the park's slots were booked, she said.

"We haven't had anywhere near what we usually have. People didn't travel here.

"[But] I've had a lot of phone calls this morning of people rebooking," Ms Brunjes said.

Trudy Schultz, who runs apartment accommodation The Great Escape Lofts, said residents needed to ramp up their promotion of their town to tourists "while Gloucester is still in the press". "We need to get Gloucester back on its feet. Tourism has taken a downturn because of the negative press. We had a lot of people ringing up and say they were not coming ... about a 30 or 40 per cent decrease [in bookings]."

And Mr Wisemantel said Mr Naden's presence could be used to attract true-crime tourists to Gloucester. "We could get the tourists coming to see where Malcolm was roaming like a wild boar."

While many are wondering just how Malcolm Naden survived seven years in the bush before being caught, Gloucester locals joke they've solved the mystery - he's been eating pies, drinking coffee and even ordering a Christmas ham.

Rumours and tall tales have been drifting around the upper Hunter town of 2600 people since the police search party moved there two months ago.

Gary Daley, the publican at the Avon Valley Inn, said he had heard plenty of stories about Naden traded over

schooners. "Some people say they've seen him 15 or 20 miles away, in Taree and Forster. "Then he was eating pies out of the bakehouse.

"He was seen buying pies and standing out the front eating pies."

Many locals also claimed to have up-close encounters with Naden, Mr Daley said.

"We've had a couple of blokes that have some property up in Nowendoc, he's broken into their house a couple of times apparently for food and clothing and stuff."

Locals also spoke of one rumour that a vigilante tracker faced off with Naden in the bush.

Mr Daley said he wasn't surprised Naden never turned up for a beer. "He would have been a bit grubby, I'd imagine."

Rebecca from Hebbys Bakery said Naden had been the "talk of the town".

"There's been rumours that people had seen him in the outskirts of town.

"Some people were frightened that he might come to town, but I guess he was only after food and shelter and warmth.

Stories of Naden emerging from the bush to come in to town and buy pies from the bakery were news to her. "I've never served him.

"But there's been a joke about him being around. "The butcher said he'd been in there and got a ham for Christmas." But butcher Darrel Wisemantel was not so sure it was a joke.

"I'm not sure who it was, but they said it was Malcolm Naden and they gave us an address in the area where he'd been hiding. "I thought it was great.

"There's people that reckon they've sighted him in paddocks, I don't know whether it's true or false.

"There was that many stories running around here at one time, who knows."

CHAPTER SEVEN:

Frederick Ward (1835-1870), bushranger, alias 'Captain Thunderbolt', was born at Windsor, New South Wales. He was working as a drover and horse-breaker at Tocal station on the Paterson River when arrested with James Garbutt and indicted for stealing and receiving seventy-five horses at Maitland on 21 April 1856; Ward was sentenced to ten years' hard labour on 13 August on the receiving charge.

Released conditionally from Cockatoo Island late in July 1860, Ward worked as a horse-breaker at Cooyal near Mudgee until his ticket-of-leave was cancelled on 17 September 1861 for 'absence from Muster' and he was tried on 3 October for horse-stealing. Returned to Cockatoo Island to complete his original sentence with an additional three years, Ward escaped with Frederick Brittain about 11 September 1863. In 1864-65 Ward lived quietly with his 'wife', Mary Ann, née Bugg, a half-caste Aboriginal, on the Culgoa River near Bourke with two children. He adopted the name 'Captain Thunderbolt' in the early 1860s. He carried out a series of armed robberies near Bourke with three associates, including a 16-year-old boy John Thomson, who was shot and captured by the police at Millie near Moree. Ward and two others robbed inns and mail-coaches in

the Liverpool Plains District; in December 1865 at Carroll near Gunnedah they held up an inn and danced and drank until the police arrived. They wounded a policeman and escaped, abandoning three pack-horses. Ward separated from his companions and never again made a stand when the police approached.

Alone, with a reward of £200 on his head, Ward held up mailmen and on 3 February 1867 was almost captured while drunk near Manilla. He took an accomplice Thomas Mason, a 16-year-old orphan, with whom he robbed the mails in the New England and Upper Hunter areas as well as the Liverpool Plains District. While hiding out in the Borah ranges they became separated, Mason was captured in August and convicted of highway robbery. Mary Ann followed Ward whenever possible; at Stroud in March 1866 she had been sentenced to six months for vagrancy but was released in April, because the conviction was not accurately drawn up.

Ward's next companion was William Monckton, a 13-year-old runaway, with whom he robbed travellers and the mails in the New England area. Late in 1868 Monckton abandoned Ward who then worked alone and less actively; on 25 May 1870 he was surprised while testing an inferior horse and was chased and shot by Constable Alexander Binney Walker at Kentucky Creek near Uralla. A Protestant, he was buried in Uralla cemetery without religious rites.

Ward was 5 ft 8 ¼ ins (173 cm) tall, slight, and of sallow complexion with hazel-grey eyes and light-brown curly hair. He undoubtedly had great nerve, endurance and unusual self-reliance and his success as a bushranger can be largely attributed to his horsemanship and splendid mounts, to popular sympathy inspired by his agreeable appearance and conversation, and to his gentlemanly behaviour and avoidance of violence; He also showed prudence in not robbing armed coaches, or towns where a policeman was stationed. The last of the professional bushrangers in New South Wales, Ward was the most successful.

Jimmy Governor [aka Jimmy Blacksmith]:

Jimmy Governor was a mass murderer who spent a number of months in the newly federated Australia killing people and taunting the police trying to catch him. He was involved in the death of nine women and children, the maiming of numerous others, and the rape of a teenage girl. He was caught on the 27th of October 1900 and hung on the 18th January 1901.

Perhaps Jimmy's memory would have faded into history had he not been part-Aborigine. His mixed-blood status inspired a sense of intrigue and sympathy that was not usually extended to mass murderers. People wanted to know why he did what he did. Some explained his actions as stemming from his Aboriginal heritage. Others explained his actions as stemming from cultural

confusion regarding his mixed-blood status. Above all, there was a desire to redeem him and justify his actions.

The cultural confusion interpretation was popularised in Thomas Keneally's 1972 novel *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith*. In Keneally's novel, Jimmie Blacksmith (Governor) was a mixed-raced individual trying to become more white. Such was his desire to breed out his blackness, he learnt the trades of whites, and married a white woman. Ironically, his wife gave birth to a completely white child, which indicated her infidelity. Heartbroken, Jimmie Blacksmith roamed the countryside murdering white women with axes in order to extract his revenge on the white society that would never accept him. The white women were symbols of everything that he had wanted, but had been denied due to racism.

Although Keneally's book was an interpretation of Jimmy's life, there were a number of differences between the book and the reality. Firstly, the catalyst for Jimmy's murderous rampage was not seeing his wife give birth to a white child. There was no evidence that her child was not Jimmy's. Secondly, it was not anger at his wife that drove Jimmy to seek revenge upon the white race. To the contrary, Jimmy alleged that the first swings of his axe were motivated by protecting her honour. Jimmy alleged that his wife had been insulted by a white woman named Mrs Mawbey. To extract an apology, on the 20th July 1900, Jimmy and a mate

named Jacky Underwood visited the Mawbey homestead armed with tomahawks and nulla nullas. At the homestead, they found Mrs Mawbey, her sister Elsie Clarke, a friend named Helen Kerz, and Mrs Mawbey's children. Rather than give Jimmy the apology he demanded, allegedly Helen Kerze said:

"Pooh, you black rubbish, you want shooting for marrying a white woman."

The two men then attacked the women and children with their tomahawks and nulla nullas. Mrs Grace Mawbey, and Helen Kerz were killed, along with Mawbey's children Grace (16), Percival (14) and Hilda (11). Elsie Clarke was seriously injured. A boy named Bert managed to escape. He fled to his father's camp site and raised the alarm.

Jacky Underwood was soon caught. Jimmy was joined by his brother Joe Governor and the two became self-styled "bushrangers." The two brothers went on a fourteen-week, 3219 km murdering rampage. A feature of the rampage was that no able-bodied man was ever targeted. Instead, the Governors' victims were old men, children, infants, pregnant women, teenage girls, middle-aged women and elderly women. It was believed that all the victims were all in some way related to people that the Governors held a grievance with, or people who Jimmy's wife had asked him to kill on her behalf.

As well as targeting those least able to defend

themselves, the Governors taunted police. They gave the police clues about their whereabouts so that the Governors could publicly outwit them. It seems as though they had been inspired by other bushrangers that took delight in making the police look like idiots.

On the 13th of October, Jimmy was shot in the mouth by a hunter. In a weakened condition, he was caught on the 27th of October. At his trial, Jimmy was given a lawyer and the chance to state his defence. He blamed his wife, his mate Jacky and his brother Joe for goading him into becoming a bushranger. He also blamed the Mawbey family. Although they hadn't directly said anything racist to him until the night he killed them, they had giggled at him, and his wife told him they had said racist things to her. When taking the witness stand, Mr Mawbey said that he had always got on well with Jimmy Governor and never made any derogatory comments about him or his wife. He also said that he had never heard the women victims make derogatory comments, but conceded that they might have.

Governor was found guilty, laughed and said everything would be ok because he would go to heaven. His execution date was delayed for two months due to Federation festivities. He was then hung on the 18th of January 1901.

When Thomas Kenneally wrote *The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith* in the 1970s, he took the approach that Jimmy must have been psychologically mixed up to do

what he did. Kenneally used racism to explain Jimmy's psychological turmoil. While it is comforting to believe that someone who violently kills others is crazy, for most of human history a similar kind of inhumanity has been part of respectable society and a feature of people considered "normal". For example, in France's revolutionary era, people used to gather with their lunch to watch criminals being beheaded. Likewise, in Australia's colonial era, men were tied up and flogged until their backbones were exposed through mangled flesh. Aboriginal cultures also had quite brutal ways of delivering justice. In a Complete Account of Settlement, Watkin Tench records an Aborigine named Bennelong asking the colonists to accompany him as he set out to chop the head off an Aboriginal woman. The woman in question was the daughter of a man that had affronted Bennelong on the battlefield, and in Bennelong's mind, cutting off her head was a form of justice. For Bennelong, his feelings were so normal that he wanted to tell the governor that he was about to deliver some justice. (See below.)

Rather than be the actions of a man driven insane by his mixed heritage, Jimmy Governor's actions were more likely to be the actions of a man fusing two cultures in a way that gave him a sense of status. At the time, a large section of colonial society celebrated bushrangers. The bushrangers were seen as courageous, intelligent and patriots that defied the English. Jimmy and his brother probably wanted to share that fame. Before the attack on the Mawbey family, Jimmy used to boast that if he

were a bushranger, he would take some catching. When he informed his wife that he wanted to be a bushranger, she laughed and said, "you are not game to go." He responded by smashing all the plates in his camp, and heading off to the Mawbey homestead to prove his wife wrong.

The Governors' targeting of women and children may have been their way of evoking the maximum outrage that would in turn result in the most fame. There was little doubt that they would have been pleased to know that a reward of £1000 each had been placed on their heads, and that 200 police as well as 2,000 civilians were hunting for them. Taunting police may have been an additional way to push the reward even higher. After his capture, he proudly boasted about the homes he had robbed, the people he had bailed up, and the murders he had committed.

The status of being a bushranger was fused with Aboriginal concepts of justice that allowed retribution to be inflicted on a relative of a foe rather than the foe themselves. Perhaps in the Governors' eyes, when they sunk their tomahawks into the heads of women and babies, they were delivering justice in traditional Aboriginal style.

In a way, Jimmy Governor achieved all that he hoped for. He gained fame. He struck fear into the hearts of anyone who had ever looked down upon him, he gained immortality and he has gained admirers. Despite the

fact that he killed nine people and raped a child, people today feel that his story deserves consideration with sympathetic, compassionate and respectful eyes. These admirers justify Jimmy Governor's actions with the adage of an eye for an eye. In truth, it was more like an eye for a scratch and a life for a giggle.

Governor deserved no more compassion than the Bali bombers who murdered people because they believed their religion had been offended, the Port Arthur gunman who massacred tourists because he wanted to become famous, or the school children who dealt with rejection by shooting their former classmates and teachers. Although some Australians have wanted to martyr him, there really are more worthy candidates for martyrdom than Jimmy Governor. Ghandi he was not.

By defining Jimmy Governor as a victim, people such as Les Murray, John Maynard and Thomas Kenneally have ignored the type of person he was. In many respects, their actions are real-life examples of the themes explored in Stanley Kubrik's *A Clockwork Orange*. Just like psychopath Alex DeLarge in Kubrik's movie, Governor was defined as a victim of social engineering and his victim status was subsequently used an instrument to be exploited by writers and politicians for their own gain.

Ned Kelly

Edward "Ned" Kelly (June 1854/June 1855 11 November 1880) was an Irish Australian bushranger. He is considered by some to be merely a cold-blooded cop killer others, however, consider him to be a folk hero and symbol of Irish Australian resistance against the Anglo-Australian ruling class.

Kelly was born in Victoria to an Irish convict father, and as a young man he clashed with the Victoria Police. Following an incident at his home in 1878, police parties searched for him in the bush. After he killed three policemen, the colony proclaimed Kelly and his gang wanted outlaws.

A final violent confrontation with police took place at Glenrowan on 28 June 1880. Kelly, dressed in home-made plate metal armour and helmet, was captured and sent to jail. He was convicted of three counts of capital murder and hanged at Old Melbourne Gaol in November 1880. His daring and notoriety made him an iconic figure in Australian history, folklore, literature, art and film.

Early life

Ned's father, John, was transported in 1841 from Tipperary to Tasmania for stealing two pigs, and not for

shooting at a landlord as the Victorian Royal Commission indicated in "an unwarrantable piece of propaganda."

After his release in 1848, Red Kelly moved to Victoria and found work at James Quinns farm at Wallan Wallan, where he worked as a bush carpenter. He subsequently turned his attention to gold-digging, at which he was successful and which enabled in time to purchase a small freehold at Beveridge.

At the age of 30 he married Ellen Quinn, the 18-year-old daughter of his employer. Their first child, Mary, died early (1851), but Ellen then gave birth to a daughter, Annie, in 1853. He here became noted as an expert cattle-stealer and in 1865 he was convicted of cattle-duffing, and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. Red Kelly died at Avenel on 27 December 1866 shortly after his release from Kilmore gaol. When John Kelly died he was survived by his wife and seven offspring, Ned and Dan, James, Mrs. Gunn, Mrs. Skillion, Kate and Grace. Several months later the Kelly family acquired uncultivated farmland at Eleven Mile Creek near the Greta area of Victoria, which to this day is known as "Kelly Country".

Their first son, Edward (Ned), was born in Beveridge, just north of Melbourne. His date of birth is not known, but at Beveridge, he said to an officer, "Look across there to the left. Do you see a little hill there?" , "That is where I was born about 28 years ago. Now, I am passing

through it, I suppose, to my doom."

Ned was baptised by an Augustinian priest, Charles O'Hea. As a boy, he obtained some basic schooling and once risked his life to save another boy, Richard Shelton, from drowning. As a reward he was given a green sash by the boy's family, which he wore under his armour during his final showdown with police in 1880.

The Kellys were suspected many times of cattle or horse stealing, though never convicted. Red Kelly was arrested when he killed and skinned a calf claimed to be the property of his neighbour. He was found innocent of theft, but guilty of removing the brand from the skin and given the option of a twenty-five pound fine or a sentence of six months with hard labour. Without money to pay the fine Red served his sentence in Kilmore gaol, with the sentence having an ultimately fatal effect on his health. The saga surrounding Red, and his treatment by the police, made a strong impression on his son Ned.

In all, eighteen charges were brought against members of Ned's immediate family before he was declared an outlaw, while only half that number resulted in guilty verdicts. This is a highly unusual ratio for the time, and is one of the reasons that has caused many to posit that Ned's family was unfairly targeted from the time they moved to northeast Victoria. Perhaps the move was necessary because of Ellen's squabbles with family members and her appearances in court over family

disputes.

Rise to notoriety

Ned's first documented brush with the law was on October 15, 1869 at the age of 14 when he was charged with the assault and robbery of Ah Fook, a pig and fowl trader from a Chinese camp near Bright. According to Ah Fook, as he was passing the Kelly house, Ned approached him with a long bamboo stick, announcing that he was a bushranger and would kill him if he did not hand over his money. Ned then took him into the bush, beat him with the stick and stole 10 shillings. According to Ned, his sister Annie and two witnesses, Bill Skilling and Bill Grey, Annie was sitting outside the house sewing when Ah Fook walked up and asked for a drink of water. Given creek water, he abused Annie for not giving him rain water and Ned came outside and pushed him. Ah Fook then hit Ned three times with the bamboo stick causing him to run away. Ah Fook then walked away threatening to return and burn the house down. Ned did not return until sundown. Historians find neither account convincing and believe that Ned's account is likely true up to being hit by Ah Fook but then Ned likely took the stick from him and beat him with it. Ned was arrested the following day for Highway Robbery and locked up overnight in Benalla. He appeared in court the following morning but Sergeant Whelan, despite using an interpreter to translate Ah Fook's account, requested a remand to allow time to find an interpreter. Ned was remanded in custody for four days. Appearing in court on 20 October he was again remanded in custody after the police failed to produce an interpreter. The charge was finally dismissed on 26 October and Ned was released.

Sergeant Whelan disliked Ned. Three months earlier he had prosecuted Yeaman Gunn for possession of stolen mutton, Ned had testified that he had sold several sheep to Gunn that same day. In a controversial judgement, the magistrate found Gunn guilty and fined him. Furious that Ned was not convicted for the robbery, he now kept a careful watch on the Kelly family and, according to fellow officers, Whelan became "a perfect encyclopedia of knowledge about them" through his "diligence".

Following his appearance in court, the Benalla Ensign reported, "The cunning of himself [Ned] and his mates got him off", the Beechworth Advertiser on the other hand reported, "... the charge of robbery has been trumped up by the Chinaman to be revenged on Kelly, who had obviously assaulted him." Interestingly, Ah Fook had described 14 year old Ned as being aged around 20 years. Some 12 months later a reporter wrote that Ned "gives his age as 15 but is probably between 18 and 20". Although 5' 8" in height, Ned was physically imposing. When arrested, a trooper was purportedly unable to subdue the then 15 year old Ned until several labourers ran to assist him and even then Ned had to be knocked unconscious.

On 10 May the following year, he was arrested on three charges of Highway Robbery and accused of being an accomplice of bushranger Harry Power. On the first two charges the victims could not identify Ned and the charges were dismissed. Although the victims for the third charge were reported to have also failed to identify Ned they had in fact been refused a chance to

identify him by Superintendents Nicolas and Hare. Instead, superintendent Nicolas told the magistrate that Ned fitted the description and asked for him to be remanded to the Kyneton court for trial. Instead of being sent to Kyneton, he was sent to Melbourne where he spent the weekend in the Richmond lockup before being transferred to Kyneton. No evidence was produced in court and he was released after a month. Historians tend to disagree over this episode: some see it as evidence of police harassment; others believe that Kelly's relatives intimidated the witnesses, making them reluctant to give evidence. Another factor in the lack of identification may have been that the witnesses had described Power's accomplice as a "half-caste". However, superintendent Nicholas and Captain Standish believed this to be the result of Ned going unwashed. Ned's grandfather, James Quinn, owned a huge piece of land at the headwaters of the King River known as Glenmore Station, where Power was ultimately arrested. Following Power's arrest it was rumoured that Ned had informed on him and Ned was treated with hostility within the community. Ned wrote a letter to police Sergeant Babington pleading for his help in the matter. The informant was in fact Ned's uncle, Jack Lloyd.

In October 1870, Kelly was arrested again for assaulting a hawker, Jeremiah McCormack, and for his part in sending McCormack's childless wife an indecent note that had calves' testicles enclosed. This was a result of a row earlier that day caused when McCormack accused a

friend of the Kellys, Ben Gould, of using his horse without permission. Gould wrote the note, and Kelly passed it on to one of his cousins to give to the woman. He was sentenced to three months' hard labour on each charge.

Upon his release Kelly returned home. There he met Isaiah "Wild" Wright who had arrived in the area on a chestnut mare. While he was staying with the Kellys the mare had gone missing and Wright borrowed one of the Kelly horses to return to Mansfield. He asked Ned to look for the chestnut and keep it until his return. Kelly found the mare and used it to go to Wangaratta where he stayed for a few days but while riding through Greta on his way home, Ned was approached by police constable Hall who, from the description of the animal, knew the horse was stolen property. When his attempt to arrest Kelly turned into a fight, Hall drew his gun and tried to shoot him, but Kelly overpowered the policeman and humiliated him by riding him like a horse. Hall later struck Kelly several times with his revolver after he had been arrested. Ned always maintained that he had no idea that the mare actually belonged to the Mansfield postmaster and that Wright had stolen it. After just three weeks of freedom, 16-year-old Kelly, along with his brother-in-law Alex Gunn, was sentenced to three years imprisonment with hard labour for "feloniously receiving a horse". "Wild" Wright escaped arrest for the theft on 2 May following an "exchange of shots" with police, but was arrested the following day, Wright received only eighteen months

for stealing the horse. After his release from Pentridge Prison in February 1874, Ned allegedly fought and won a bare-knuckled boxing match with 'Wild' Wright that lasted 20 rounds.

While Kelly was in prison, his brothers Jim (aged 12) and Dan (aged 10) were arrested by Constable Flood for riding a horse that did not belong to them. The horse had been lent to them by a farmer for whom they had been doing some work, but the boys spent a night in the cells before the matter was cleared.

Two years later, Jim Kelly was arrested for cattle-duffing. He and his family claimed that he did not know that some of the cattle did not belong to his employer and cousin Tom Lloyd. Jim was given a five-year sentence, but as O'Brien pointed out the receiver of the 'stolen stock' James Dixon was not prosecuted as he was 'a gentleman'.

Shoemaker Shop Brawl

In September 1877 Ned was drunk and was arrested for riding over a footpath and locked-up for the night. The next day, while he was being taken out of the cell and escorted by four policemen he escaped and ran, taking refuge in a shoemakers shop. The police and the shop owner tried to put handcuffs on him but failed. During the struggle Ned's trousers were almost ripped off. Trying to get Ned to submit, Constable Lonigan, who Ned was to later shoot dead, "black-balled" him (grabbed and squeezed his testicles). During the

struggle, a miller walked in, and on seeing the atrocious behaviour of the police said "You should be ashamed of yourselves". The miller then tried to pacify the situation and induced Kelly to put on the handcuffs.

Ned Kelly said about the incident " It was in the course of this attempted arrest Fitzpatrick endeavoured to catch hold of me by the foot, and in the struggle he tore the sole and heel of my boot clean off. With one well-directed blow, I sent him sprawling against the wall, and the staggering blow I then gave him partly accounts to me for his subsequent conduct towards my family and myself."

Legend has it that Ned told Lonigan "If I ever shoot a man, Lonigan, it'll be you!".

In October 1877, Gustav and William Baumgarten were arrested for supplying stolen horses to Ned Kelly and were later sentenced in 1878. William served time in Pentridge Prison, Melbourne.

Following Ned Kelly's death, Ned's mother, Ellen, had married a Californian named George King, by whom she had three children. He, Ned and Dan became involved in a cattle rustling operation.

Fitzpatrick Incident

On 15 April 1878 Constable Strachan, the officer in charge of the Greta police station, had information that Ned Kelly, whom the police had been seeking to arrest,

was at a certain shearing shed, and he was sent to apprehend him. As lawlessness was rampant at Greta, it was recognised the police station could not be left without protection, and Constable Fitzpatrick was ordered there for relief duty. He was instructed to proceed direct to Greta, but instead of obeying instructions, he rode off to the hotel at Winton, where he spent some considerable time. On resuming his journey the thought entered his head that a couple of days previously he had seen in The Police Gazette that a warrant was in existence for the arrest of Dan Kelly for horse stealing and he decided, contrary to instruction, that there should be at least two constables present at all times when the police visited the Kelly homestead, to effect Dan's arrest. Finding Dan not at home, he remained with Mrs. Kelly and other members of her family, in conversation, for about an hour. Upon hearing someone chopping wood, he proceeded to the area of the sound to ensure that the chopping was licensed. The man proved to be William "Bricky" Williamson, a neighbour, who said that he only needed a licence if he was chopping on Crown land Fitzpatrick then observed two horsemen making towards the house he had just left. The men proved to be the teenager Dan Kelly, and his brother-in-law, Skillion. Fitzpatrick returned to the house and formally placed Dan under arrest. Dan said he was just about to have dinner, asked to be allowed to have it, and the constable consented, and took a seat near his prisoner.

In an interview Ned Kelly said that Mrs Kelly asked

Fitzpatrick if he had a warrant, and Fitzpatrick said he had not, but he had a telegram. Mrs Kelly there upon said Dan need not go unless he chose, as there was no warrant. Fitzpatrick then said, pulling out a revolver, "I will blow your brains out if you interfere." Mrs Kelly then said, "You would not be so handy with that popgun of yours if Ned were here." Dan then said, trying to trick Fitzpatrick "Here he (Ned) is coming along." While he was pretending to look out of the window for Ned, Dan cornered Fitzpatrick, took the revolver from him and made him prisoner, then releasing him unharmed. Kelly denies that Fitzpatrick ever tried to take liberties with his sister. Ned Kelly also asserts that he was not near the place when the affray took place and that Fitzpatrick's wound was self-inflicted. Upon the false evidence of Fitzpatrick, Kelly says his mother, Skillian and Williamson were convicted. A reward of 100 was then offered for his (Kelly's) arrest for an alleged offence with which he had nothing to do. It was the unjust treatment that exasperated him, and led to his taking to the bush.

Fitzpatrick rode to Benalla where he claimed that he had been attacked by Ned, Dan, Ellen, their associate Brickly Williamson and Ned's brother-in-law, Bill Skillion. Fitzpatrick claimed that all except Ellen had been armed with revolvers and that Ned had shot him in the left wrist and that Ellen had hit him on the helmet with a coal shovel. Williamson and Skillion were arrested for their part in the affair. Ned and Dan were nowhere to be found, but Ellen was taken into custody along with

her baby, Alice. She was still in prison at the time of Ned's execution. (Ellen would outlive her most famous son by several decades and died on 27 March 1923.)

Trial at Beechworth

Despite Fitzpatrick's treating doctor reporting a strong smell of alcohol on the constable and his inability to confirm the wrist wound was caused by a bullet, Fitzpatrick's evidence was accepted by the police and the Judge. Ellen Kelly, Skillion and Williamson appeared on 9 October 1878 before Judge Redmond Barry charged with attempted murder and were convicted on Fitzpatrick's unsupported evidence. Skillion and Williamson both received sentences of six years and Ellen three years. Barry stated that if Ned were present he would 'give him 15 years'. Fitzpatrick's testimony of events is coloured by the fact that he was later dismissed from the force for drunkenness and perjury and that after the trial Dr. Nicholson told Fitzpatrick that his wound was never caused by a bullet.

Killings at Stringybark Creek

Dan and Ned Kelly doubted they could convince the police of their story. Instead they went into hiding, where they were later joined by friends Joe Byrne and Steve Hart.

On 25 October 1878, Sergeant Kennedy set off to search for the Kellys, accompanied by Constables McIntyre, Lonigan, and Scanlon. The wanted men were suspected

of being in the Wombat Ranges north of Mansfield, Victoria. The police set up a camp near two shepherd huts at Stringybark Creek in a heavily timbered area. A second police party had set off from Greta near the Wangaratta end, with the intention of closing in on Ned in a pincer movement.

The Mansfield team of police under Kennedy on arrival at Stringybark split into two groups: Kennedy and Scanlon went in search of the Kellys, while the others, Lonigan and McIntyre remained to guard their camp. Brown suggested in *Australian Son* (1948) that Sgt. Kennedy was tipped off as to the whereabouts of the Kellys. O'Brien (1999) drew attention to the 1881 Royal Commission's questioning of McIntyre, which explored a possibility that Kennedy and Scanlon may have searched for the Kellys to gain a reward for themselves. Jones stated (p. 131) that Kennedy and Scanlon had once split a reward for the arrest of 'Wild Wright'. O'Brien's research focus on the practice of splitting rewards highlighted that it was known as 'going whacks'.

The Mansfield police team (Lonigan and McIntyre) remaining in the base camp fired at parrots, unaware they were only a mile away from the Kelly camp. Alerted by the shooting, the Kellys searched and discovered the well-armed police camped near the "shingle hut" at Stringybark Creek. Although the police were disguised as prospectors, they had pack horses with leather strap arrangements suitable for carrying

out bodies.

Ned Kelly and his brother Dan considered their chances of survival against the well-armed party and decided to overpower the two officers, then wait for the two others to return. According to Jones (p. 132) the Kellys knew that a police member (Strahan), from Greta team boasted he would shoot Ned 'like a dog' and Kelly believed these police were that Greta party. He was unaware of the Mansfield group. Ned's plan was for the police to surrender, allowing the Kellys to take their arms and horses. Ned and Dan advanced to the police camp, ordering them to surrender. Constable McIntyre threw his arms up. Lonigan drew his revolver and Ned shot him. Lonigan staggered some distance, and collapsed dead.

When the other two police returned to camp, Constable McIntyre, at Ned's direction, called on them to surrender. Scanlon went for his pistol; Ned fired. Scanlon was killed. Kennedy ran, firing as he sought cover moving from tree to tree. In an exchange of gunfire, Ned fired a fatal shot into Kennedy. McIntyre, in the confusion, escaped on horseback uninjured.

The exact place at Germans Creek where this occurred has only recently been identified. On leaving the scene Ned stole Sergeant Kennedy's handwritten note for his wife and his gold fob watch. Asked later why he stole the watch, Ned replied, "What's the use of a watch to a dead man?" Kennedy's watch was returned to his kin

many years later.

In response to these killings the Victorian parliament passed the Felons' Apprehension Act which outlawed the gang and made it possible for anyone to shoot them. There was no need for the outlaws to be arrested or for there to be a trial upon apprehension. The Act was based on the 1865 Act passed in New South Wales which declared Ben Hall and his gang outlaws.

Bank robberies

Following the killings at Stringybark, the gang committed two major robberies, at Euroa, Victoria and Jerilderie, New South Wales. Their strategy involved the taking of hostages and robbing the bank safes.

Euroa

It was midday on 9 December 1878 when Ned Kelly, walked into the homestead of Gooram Gooram Gong Wool station, at Faithful's Creek, owned by Mr Younghusband, and assured the people here that they had nothing to fear, and asked for food for themselves and their horses. An employee named Fitzgerald, who was eating his dinner at the time, had one look at the bushranger, and one at the large revolver that he was nonchalantly toying with, and said, "Well, if the gentlemen want food I suppose they have got to have it." The other three outlaws, having attended to the horses, joined their chief, and the four of them imprisoned all the men on the station in a spare

building used as a store. No interference was offered to the women. He assured the male captives time after time that they had nothing whatever to fear. Late in the afternoon the manager of the station, Mr. Macauley, returned and was promptly bailed up. He told Ned Kelly that it was not much use coming to that station, because their own horses were better than any he had. Ned, however, told him that he did not want horses, did not want anything but food for themselves and for their cattle.

Towards evening a hawker named Gloster came along with his wagon, and camped, as usual, on the station. When he went to the kitchen, a station hand said, "the Kelly's are here." Gloster replied, "I wish they were, it would be 2,000 in my pocket." Ned Kelly looked up. and said, "What is that you say." Gloster, without waiting to give an explanation, rushed towards the wagon, and Ned and Joe Byrne followed. Mr. McCauley was looking out for the safety of Gloster, so he followed them. Gloster on reaching his wagon, was making a search for his revolver, but he was "covered" by the bushrangers, and Mr. McCauley cried out, "Look out Gloster, you will be shot," at the same time appealing to Kelly not to shoot him. Gloster turned and said, "Who are you." Ned replied, "I am Ned Kelly, son of Red Kelly, as good a blood as any in the land, and for two pins I would put a match to your wagon and burn it." The stationhands and Gloster were all placed in the storeroom, under guard. The time passed quietly until two o'clock in the morning, and at that hour the outlaws gave a peculiar

whistle, and Steve Hart and Joe Byrne rushed from the building. Mr. McCauley was surrounded by the bushrangers, and Ned Kelly said, "You are armed, we have found a lot of ammunition in the house." After this episode the outlaws retired to have a sleep.

On the afternoon of the second day, 10 December 1878, leaving Byrne in charge of the prisoners, the other three started out to work what they called their new gold mine. First of all they cut the telegraph wires, chopping the posts down to make sure, and were careful to rip off more wire than an ordinary repairer would carry with him. Three or four railway men who saw them at work endeavored to interfere, but in a few minutes they joined the other prisoners in Younghusband's storeroom. Carrying a cheque drawn by Mr. Macauley on the National Bank for a few pounds, the three bushrangers, all heavily armed, went to the bank. In the meantime Byrne had apprehended a telegraph-line repairer, who had begun to make trouble. It was after closing time when the others reached the bank, to which they travelled in the cart taken from the hawker. Ned Kelly knocked at the door and persuaded the clerk to open and cash the cheque he had. No sooner had the bushrangers stepped in than he closed the door, and the unwise clerk found himself looking into the muzzle of the big revolver that was Kelly's favourite weapon. The manager, Mr. Scott, was next bailed up. The robbers took 700 in notes, gold, and silver. Ned Kelly insisted to the manager that there was more money there, and eventually compelled him to

open the safe, from which the outlaws got 1,500 in paper, 300 in gold, about 300 worth of, gold dust, and nearly 100 worth of silver. The behaviour of these outlaws to Mrs. Scott was polite and considerate ; indeed, it was some time before that lady would believe that the tall, kindly-mannered man who was speaking to her was the notorious outlaw chief. Mr. Scott, before he left the bank, invited the outlaws to drink whisky with him, which they did. They drank each other's health cordially. Then the whole party went to Younghusband's where the rest of the prisoners were. The evening seems to have passed quite pleasantly. McCauley remarked to Ned Kelly that the police might come along, which would mean a fight. Ned Kelly replied, "I wish they would, of there is plenty of cover here." In the evening tea was prepared, and at half-past 8 the outlaws warned the prisoners not to move for three hours, informing them that they were going. Just before they left Ned Kelly noticed that a Mr. McDougall was wearing a watch, and asked for it. McDougall replied that it was a gift from his dead mother. Kelly declared that he wouldn't take it under any consideration, and very soon afterwards the four of the outlaws left. It is a remarkable thing that all these stirring events happened without the people in the town knowing anything that was going on.

In January 1879 police arrested all known Kelly friends and sympathisers and held them without charge for three months. This action caused resentment of the government's abuse of power that led to condemnation

in the media and a groundswell of support for the gang that was a factor in their evading capture for so long.

Jerilderie

Exactly at midnight on Saturday 8 February 1879, Ned Kelly, Dan Kelly, Hart, and Byrne surrounded the Jerilderie police barracks. Hart, in a loud voice, shouted out to Devine, "Devine, there's a drunken man at Davidson's Hotel, who has committed murder. Get up at once, all of you." Constable Richards, who was sleeping in a room at the rear of the premises, replied, got up, and came round to the front door. During the short interval Devine has got out of bed, and opened the front door, when Kelly told him there was a great row at Davidson's. By this time Richards had appeared. Devine approached Kelly, who presented two revolvers at the policemen, telling them to hold up their hands. Immediately the police were pounced upon by the other men, and secured. Devine and Richards were then placed in the lock-up cell, and Mrs Devine and children were put into the sitting-room. Afterwards Mrs Devine, in her nightdress, with a candle, was made to go through the premises and deliver up all the firearms. After this the gang went into the sitting room, where they kept watch till morning.

Sunday was spent quietly. On Monday morning Byrne brought their two horses to be shod, and the blacksmith at the time thought there was something strange in the manner of the man, so he took the brands of the

horses. Hart also came down and bought provisions. About 10 a.m. Edward Kelly and Dan Kelly, in company with Constable Richards, went from the barracks, closely followed on horseback by Hart and Byrne. They all went to the Royal Hotel, Richards going first. Cox, the landlord, told him his companions were the Kellys, when Ned Kelly said they wanted rooms at the Royal, as he intended to rob the bank. Hart and Byrne rode round to the back and told the groom to put their horses in the stable, but not to give them any feed. Hart went into the kitchen of the hotel, which is only a few yards from the back entrance to the bank. Byrne then walked in the back way, when he was met by the accountant, Mr Living, who told him to go back, as that was not the proper door to enter by. Byrne immediately presented his revolver at his head, at the same time telling him to surrender. The accountant seeing resistance useless surrendered, and threw up his arms. Mackie, the junior accountant who was standing by, was also ordered to surrender. Byrne then walked them off into the bar, where Dan Kelly was on guard. Ned Kelly secured the manager, who was then ordered into the bank under threat to open the safes. When this was done, he was put in with the others. All were liberated at a quarter to three.

Two thousand pounds have been taken from the bank. When the bushrangers had finished at the bank they went to some of the hotels, treating everyone civilly, and had drinks. Hart took a new saddle from the saddler's. Several watches were taken, but afterwards

returned. Two splendid police horses were taken, and other horses were wanted, but the residents begged that they might not be taken, as they belonged to women, and the Kellys did not take them. The Kellys openly stated that they came purposely to shoot Constable Devine, only his wife begged his life. Ned Kelly stated that he intended to stick up the Urana coach and bank. Two of the police and two civilians armed with guns, offered to go in the coach, but the driver declined to take the police. The police had no means of following the gang, being unarmed and without horses.

Mr S. Gill, journalist, when called upon to stand, being frightened ran away, and planted himself in the creek. Ned Kelly in company with Mr Living and Constable Richards came over to the printing office, when Richards said, " Mrs Gill, don't be afraid, this is Kelly." Kelly said, " All I want him for is for your husband to print this letter, the history of my life, and I wanted to see him to explain it to him." Mr Living said, " For God's sake, Kelly, give me the papers, and I will give them to Gill." Mr Living under promise then received the papers. This is given as I received it from Mrs Gill, who though alarmed never showed any fear. Later in the day Kelly mixed up with a number of persons at M'Dougall's, and said any one could shoot him, but they would have to abide the consequences, as every inhabitant would be shot.

Mr Living, the teller, and Mr Tarleton, the manager of

the bank, arrived in Melbourne on Tuesday, and supplied the press with information. After the manager had been secured, Ned Kelly took Mr Living into the bank and asked him what money they had in the bank. Living replied there was between 600 and 700, when Kelly said, " You must have 10,000 in the bank." Living then handed him the teller 's cash, amounting to about 691. They then tried to put the money in a bag, but not having one sufficiently large. Ned Kelly went and brought a bag, and they put the money into it. Kelly asked if they had more money, and was answered "No." Kelly then obtained the teller's revolver, and again requested more money. He then went to the safe and caught hold of the treasure drawer, and requested to know what was in it, and was told by Living that it contained nothing of any value. Kelly insisted on it being opened, and one of the keys was given to him ; but he could not open it, owing to the manager having the second key, which was required to open it. Byrne then wanted to break it open with a sledge hammer, but Kelly brought the manager from the Royal Hotel, and demanded the key, which was given to him, and the drawer was opened, when the sum of 1450 was taken out by Kelly and placed in the bag.

The gang then prepared to go, but before doing so Ned Kelly made a speech, with the evident intention of exciting pity. He said that on the occasion when Fitzpatrick, the Benalla constable, was shot, he was not within 400 miles of Greta, and during his career he had stolen 280 horses from Whitty's station, and sold them ;

and beyond this he had never been guilty of any other crime. The horses, he stated, were sold to Baumgarten. Kelly showed those present his revolvers, and pointed out one which he said was the property of Constable Lonigan, and further stated that the musket which he shot Lonigan with was an old worn-out crooked thing. He asked those present if they would like to be treated as he had been treated, and detectives to go their houses and present revolvers at their mothers and sisters, and threaten to shoot them if they did not say where Ned Kelly was. He considered such treatment to be more than any man could stand, and was enough to make him turn an outlaw. He said that he came to that place not with the intention of robbing the bank, but to shoot the two policemen, Devine and Richards, who were worse than any black trackers, especially Richards, whom he intended to shoot immediately. Mr Tarleton remarked to Kelly that it was Richards's duty, and he should not blame him for doing it. Kelly then replied, "Suppose you had your revolver ready when I came in, would you not have shot me?" Mr Tarleton replied "Yes." "Well," said Kelly, "that's just what I am going to do with Richards shoot him before he shoots me." The party then interceded for Richards, but Kelly said, "He must die." Kelly then started to walk in the direction of the police camp, in company with Richards. Hart and Dan Kelly rode up the street shouting and flourishing their revolvers. The captives were then free. Both the Kellys were dressed as troopers. Before leaving, Ned Kelly remarked that he had made a great blunder in

connection with the affair which would likely be the means of capturing the gang.

New South Wales issued rewards totaling 4,000. The Victorian Government increased its reward to match making the total reward for the Kelly gang 8,000 (A\$400,000).

From early March 1879 to June 1880 nothing was heard of the gang's whereabouts with one possible exception. In late March 1879 Ned's sisters Kate and Margaret approached the captain of the Victoria Cross, then docked in Melbourne, and enquired as to how much he would charge to take four or five gentlemen friends to California if they boarded in Queenscliff. Nothing definite was arranged but on 31 March, a man he described as having a somewhat suspicious appearance called on the captain to confirm the passage discussed by the Kelly sisters. The captain arranged an appointment at the General Post Office that afternoon to give a definite answer for the cost then contacted police, who placed a large number of detectives and plain-clothes police throughout the building, but the man failed to appear. There is no evidence that Ned's sisters were enquiring on behalf of the gang, and it was reported in the Argus as 'without foundation'.

In April 1880 a Notice of Withdrawal of Reward was posted by Government. It stated that after 20 July 1880 the Government would "absolutely cancel and withdraw the offer for the reward".

Jerilderie letter

Months prior to arriving in Jerilderie, and with help from Joe Byrne, Ned Kelly dictated a lengthy letter for publication describing his view of his activities and the treatment of his family and, more generally, the treatment of Irish Catholics by the police and the English and Irish Protestant squatters.

The Jerilderie Letter, as it is called, is a document of 7,391 words and has become a famous piece of Australian literature. Kelly had written a previous letter (14 December 1878) to a member of Parliament stating his grievances, but the correspondence had been suppressed from the public. The letter highlights the various incidents that led to him becoming an outlaw (see Rise to notoriety).

Extracts of the letter were published, and then it was concealed until re-discovered in 1930. It was then published in full by the Melbourne Herald.

The handwritten document was donated anonymously to the State Library of Victoria in 2000. Historian Alex McDermott says of the Letter, "... even now it's hard to defy his voice. With this letter Kelly inserts himself into history, on his own terms, with his own voice...We hear the living speaker in a way that no other document in our history achieves..." Kelly's language is colourful, rough and full of metaphors; it is "one of the most extraordinary documents in Australian history".

The National Museum of Australia in Canberra holds publican John Hanlon's transcript of the Jerilderie Letter.

Capture, trial and execution

On 26 June 1880 the Felons' Apprehension Act 612 expired, with the result that not only was the gang's outlaw status no longer in effect but that their arrest warrants also expired. While Ned and Dan still had prior warrants outstanding for the attempted murder of Fitzpatrick, technically Hart and Byrne were free men although the police still retained the right to re-issue the murder warrants.

Murder of Sherritt, State library of Victoria On Friday, June 25, 1880:

Dan Kelly and Joe Byrne rode into the valley known as 'The Woolshed,' where Aaron Sherritt had a small farm. Ned had decided to rob the banks of Benalla, headquarters of most of the police engaged in the Kelly hunt. First he planned to kill or capture the Benalla police in a pitched battle at the small town of Glenrowan, when they had been lured there by a diversion further along the railway line. Aaron Sherritt was to provide the necessary 'diversion.' Treacherous, brutal, immoral and vain, Sherritt was the most dangerous of the many police informers. He was also a reckless and foolish man. Police money had bought him a thoroughbred horse, flash clothes, and a fatal arrogance.

Spurned as a traitor by Joe Byrne's younger sister, he had approached Kate Kelly (outlaw) and had been threatened by an enraged Mrs. Skillion. Finally he had married a 15yo girl and settled down on his parents' farm to spy for the police and work for the death of his former friends. Illogically, he reasoned that he was still unsuspected; impudently, he had spoken of the 8000 blood money which would soon be his. His friend Supt. Hare did not quite share his confidence and had stationed 4 policemen at the Sherritt house for 'protection.' Joe knew that Sherritt had police protection and planned the 'execution' very carefully. They had watched the hut the previous night and seen Aaron come to the door, alone, to talk to Anton Weekes, a German who had a small farm nearby.

Now the two outlaws captured Weekes, handcuffed him and warned him that he would not be hurt if he did exactly as they told him. Weekes was pushed to the back door of the hut. Joe rapped on the panels and then stood back, with Dan in the darkness. They could hear movement inside the building and then Sherritt's voice: 'Who is there?' Prompted by Joe, the German replied: 'It is me, I have lost my way.' Young Mrs. Sherritt opened the door. Aaron stood framed in the door way and began to joke with Weekes. 'You must be drunk, Anton. You know that it's over that way,' laughed Sherritt. As he raised his arm to point the direction, Joe Byrne fired at practically point-blank range. The informer staggered back into his home bleeding badly from a bullet through the chest. Joe followed him into

the room and fired again. Sherritt died without uttering a word. His wife screamed and ran to cradle his head in her arms while her mother (Mrs. Barry) asked her son-in-law's killer: 'Why did you do it, Joe? Why did you do it?' Mrs. Barry knew the Byrne family well and had been a particular friend of Mrs. Byrne, Joe's mother. 'I won't hurt you, Ma'am,' replied the outlaw. 'But that ***** had it coming to him. He will never put me away again.'

When Weeks had first knocked at the door Constable Duross had been talking with Sherritt and his wife in the kitchen. At the first suspicion of danger he hastened back to join the 3 other police men in the bedroom. The four men stayed huddled together in the darkness, quaking with fear, while their host, the man they were guarding, was shot. Joe told Mrs. Barry to open the front door of the hut. She did so and saw Dan Kelly standing a few feet from it with a rifle ready for instant use. The Sherritt home was a typical 2-room slab hut of the period. Dan could see through the bedroom and kitchen to Joe at the back. 'All right police,' he shouted. 'You've been looking for the Kellys. 'Well, here we are'.' Joe ordered the frightened women to leave the house. When they had done so the outlaws began shooting into the walls of the bedroom. The police threw themselves to the floor.

Glenrowan shootout

According to Ned Kelly, the gang, after shooting Sherritt at Sebastopol, rode openly through the streets of

Beechworth, and then came onto Glenrowan for the purpose of wrecking any special police train which, might be sent after them. They descended on Glenrowan about 8 o'clock on Sunday morning 27 June, and rousing up all the inhabitants of the township, bailed them up. Feeling unable to lift the rails themselves, they compelled the line-repairers of the district and others to do so. The spot selected was on the first turning after reaching Glenrowan, at a culvert and on an incline. One rail was raised on each side, and the sleepers were removed. The intention was the destruction of the special train. Having performed this fiendish piece of work Kelly returned to the township, and, bailing all the people up, kept them prisoners in the station-master's house and Jones's hotel. By 3 o'clock on Monday morning, they gathered all their captives into the hotel, and the number of those unfortunate people amounted at one time to 47. The police then arrived.

The gang members were equipped with armour that was tough enough to repel bullets (but left the legs unprotected). It is not known exactly who made the armour, although it was likely forged from stolen or donated plough mouldboards. Each man's armour weighed about 96 pounds (44 kg); all four had helmets, and Byrne's was said to be the most well done, with the brow reaching down to the nose piece, almost forming two eye slits. All wore grey cotton coats reaching past the knees over the armour.

While holed up in the Glenrowan Inn, the Kelly gang's attempt to derail the police train failed because of the actions of a released hostage, schoolmaster Thomas Curnow. Curnow convinced Ned to let him go and then as soon as he was released he alerted the authorities by standing on the railway line near sunrise and waving a lantern wrapped in his red scarf. The police then stopped the train before it would have been derailed and laid siege to the inn at dawn on Monday 28 June.

According to the reporters from The Argus who were on scene, the first contact was exceedingly hot. The police and the gang blazed away at each other in the darkness furiously. It lasted for about a quarter of an hour, and during that time there was nothing but a succession of flashes and reports, the pinging of bullets in the air, and the shrieks of women who had been made prisoners in the hotel. Then there was a lull, but nothing could be seen for a minute or two because of the smoke. In a few minutes Superintendent Hare returned to the railway-station with a shattered wrist. The first shot fired by the gang had passed through his left wrist. He bled profusely from the wound, but Mr. Carrington, artist of The Sketcher, tied up the wound with his handkerchief, and checked the hemorrhage. Mr. Hare then set out again for the fray, and cheered his men on as well as he could, but he gradually became so weak from loss of blood that he had reluctantly to retire, and was soon afterwards conveyed to Benalla by a special engine

At about 5 o'clock in the morning a heart rending wail

of grief ascended from the hotel. The voice was easily distinguished as that of Mrs. Jones, the landlady. Mrs. Jones was lamenting the fate of her son, who had been shot in the back, as she supposed, fatally. She came out from the hotel crying bitterly and wandered into the bush on several occasions, and nature seemed to echo her grief. She always returned, however, to the hotel, until she succeeded, with the assistance, of one of the prisoners, in removing her wounded boy from the building, and in sending him on to Wangaratta for medical treatment. The firing continued intermittently, as occasion served, and bullets were continually heard coursing through the air. Several lodged in the station buildings, and a few struck the train. By this time the hotel was completely surrounded by the police and the black trackers and a vigilant watch of the hotel was kept up during the dark hours.

At daybreak police reinforcements arrived from Benalla, Beechworth, and Wangaratta. Superintendent Sadlier came from Benalla with nine more men, and Sergeant Steele, of Wangaratta, with six, thus augmenting the besieging force to about 30 men. Before daylight Senior-constable Kelly found a revolving rifle and a cap lying in the bush, about 100 yards from the hotel. The rifle was covered with blood and a pool of blood lay near it. This was evidently the property of one of the bushrangers, and a suspicion therefore arose that they had escaped. That these articles not only belonged to one of the outlaws but to Ned Kelly himself was soon proved. When day was dawning the women and

children who had been made prisoners in the hotel were allowed to depart. They were, however, challenged individually as they approached the police line, for it was thought that the outlaws might attempt to escape under some disguise.

Sgt Steele and railway guard Dowsett captures Ned Kelly

Capture of Ned Kelly

At daybreak, to the surprise of the police, however, they soon found themselves attacked from the rear by a man dressed in a long grey overcoat and wearing an iron mask. The appearance of the man presented an anomaly, but a little scrutiny of his appearance and behaviour soon showed that it was the veritable leader of the gang, Ned Kelly himself. On further observation it was seen that he was only armed with a revolver. He however, walked coolly from tree to tree, and received the fire of the police with the utmost indifference, returning a shot from his revolver when a good opportunity presented itself. Three men went for him, Sergeant Steele of Wangaratta, Senior-constable Kelly, and a railway guard named Dowsett. The latter, however, was only armed with a revolver. They fired at him persistently, but to their surprise with no effect. He seemed bullet-proof. It then occurred to Sergeant Steele that the fellow was encased in mail, and he then aimed at the outlaws legs. His first shot of that kind made Ned stagger, and the second brought him to the

ground with the cry, "I am done I am done." Steele rushed up along with Senior-constable Kelly and others. The outlaw howled like a wild beast brought to bay, and swore at the police. He was first seized by Steele, and as that officer grappled with him he fired off another charge from his revolver. This shot was evidently intended for Steele, but from the smart way in which he secured the murderer the sergeant escaped. Kelly became gradually quiet, and it was soon found that he had been utterly disabled. He had been shot in the left foot, left leg, right hand, left arm, and twice in the region of the groin. But no bullet had penetrated his armour. Having been divested of his armour he was carried down to the railway station, and placed in a guard's van. Subsequently he was removed to the stationmaster's office, and his wounds were dressed there by Dr. Nicholson, of Benalla.

The siege continued

In the meantime the siege was continued without intermission. That the three other outlaws were still in the house was confirmed by remarks made by Ned, who said they would fight to the last, and would never give in. The interest and excitement were consequently heightened. The Kelly gang were at last in the grasp of the police and their leader actually captured. The female prisoners who escaped during the morning gave corroboration of the fact that Dan Kelly, Byrne, and Hart were still in the house. A rumour got abroad that Byrne was shot when drinking a glass of whisky at the bar of

the hotel about half-past 5 o'clock in the morning, and the report afterwards turned out to be true. The remaining two kept up a steady defence from the rear of the building during the forenoon, and exposed themselves recklessly to the bullets of the police. They, however, were also clad in mail, and the shot took no effect. At 10 o'clock a white flag or handkerchief was held out at the front door, and immediately afterwards about 30 men, all prisoners, sallied forth holding up their hands. They escaped whilst Dan Kelly and Hart were defending the back door. The police rallied up towards them with their arms ready, and called upon them to stand. The crowd did so, and in obedience to a subsequent order fell prone on the ground. They were passed, one by one, and two of them, brothers named M'Auliffe were arrested as Kelly sympathisers. The precaution thus taken was highly necessary, as the remaining outlaws might have been amongst them. The scene presented when they were all lying on the ground, and demonstrating the respectability of their characters, was unique and, in some degree, amusing.

The end - The hotel burnt

The siege was kept up all the morning, and till nearly 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Some time before this the shooting from the hotel had ceased and opinions were divided as to whether Dan Kelly and Hart were reserving their ammunition or were dead. The best part of the day having elapsed, the police, who were now acting under the direction of Superintendent Sadlier,

determined that a decisive step should be taken. At 10 minutes to 3 o'clock another and the last volley was fired into the hotel, and under cover of the fire Senior-constable Charles Johnson, of Violet Town, ran up to the house with a bundle of straw which (having set fire to) he placed on the ground at the west side of the building. This was a moment of intense excitement, and all hearts were relieved when Johnson was seen to regain uninjured the shelter he had left. All eyes were now fixed on the silent building, and the circle of besiegers began to close in rapidly on it, some dodging from tree to tree, and many coming out boldly into the open. Just at this juncture Mrs. Skillian, sister of the Kellys, attempted to approach the house from the front. She had on a black riding habit, with a red underskirt, and white Gainsborough hat, and was a prominent object in the scene. Her arrival on the ground was almost simultaneous with the attempt to fire the building. Her object in trying to reach the house was apparently to induce the survivors, if any, to come out and surrender. The police, however, ordered her to stop. She obeyed the order, but very reluctantly, and, standing still, called out that some of the police were ordering her to go on and others to stop. She, however, went to where a group of the besiegers were standing on the west side of the house. In the meantime the straw, which burned fiercely, had all been consumed, and at first doubts were entertained as to whether Senior-constable Johnson's exploit had been successful.

Not very many minutes elapsed, however, before

smoke was seen coming out of the roof, and flames were discerned through the front window on the western side. A light westerly wind was blowing at the time, and this carried the flames from the straw underneath the wall and into the house, and as the building was lined with calico, the fire spread rapidly. Still no sign of life appeared in the building. When the house was seen to be fairly on fire, Father Gibney, who had previously started for it but had been stopped by the police, walked up to the front door and entered it. By this time the patience of the besiegers was exhausted, and they all, regardless of shelter, rushed to the building. Father Gibney, at much personal risk from the flames, hurried into a room to the left, and there saw two bodies lying side by side on their backs. He touched them, and found life was extinct in each. These were the bodies of Dan Kelly and Hart, and the rev. gentleman expressed the opinion, based on their position, that they must have killed one another. Whether they killed one another or whether both or one committed suicide, or whether both being mortally wounded by the besiegers they determined to die side by side, will never be known.

The priest had barely time to feel their bodies before the fire forced him to make a speedy exit from the room, and the flames had then made such rapid progress on the western side of the house that the few people who followed close on the rev. gentleman's heels dared not attempt to rescue the two bodies. It may be here stated that, after the house had been

burned down, the two bodies were removed from the embers. They presented a horrible spectacle, nothing but the trunk and skull being left, and these almost burnt to a cinder. Their armour was found near them. About the remains there was apparently nothing to lead to positive identification, but the discovery of the armour near them and other circumstances render it impossible to be doubted that they were those of Dan Kelly and Steve Hart. The latter was a much smaller man than the younger Kelly, and this difference in size was noticeable in their remains.

Constable Dwyer who followed Father Gibney into the hotel, states that he was near enough to the bodies to recognise Dan Kelly. As to Byrne's body it was found in the entrance to the bar-room, which was on the east side of the house, and there was time to remove it from the building, but not before the right side was slightly scorched. This body likewise presented a dreadful appearance. It looked as if it had been ill-nourished. The face was black with smoke, and the arms were bent at right angles at the elbows, the stiffened joints below the elbows standing erect. The body was quite stiff, and its appearance and the position in which it was found corroborated the statement that Byrne died early yesterday morning. He is said to have received the fatal wound, which was in the groin, while drinking a glass of whisky at the bar. He had a ring on his right hand which had belonged to Constable Scanlan, who was murdered by the gang on the Wombat Ranges. The body was dressed in a blue coat, tweed striped trousers, Crimean

shirt, and very ill-fitting boots. Like Ned Kelly, Byrne wore a bushy beard.

In the outhouse or kitchen immediately behind the main building the old man Martin Cherry, who was one of the prisoners of the gang, and who was so severely wounded that he could not leave the house when the other prisoners left, was found still living, but in articulo mortis from a wound in the groin. He was promptly removed to a short distance from the burning hotel and laid on the ground, when Father Gibney administered to him the last sacrament. Cherry was insensible, and barely alive. He had evidently suffered much during the day, and death released him from his sufferings within half an hour from the time when he was removed from the hotel. It was fortunate that he was not burned alive. Cherry, who was unmarried, was an old resident of the district and was employed as a platelayer, and resided about a mile from Glenrowan. He was born at Limerick, Ireland and was 60 years old. He is said by all who knew him to have been a quiet, harmless old man, and much regret was expressed at his death. He seems to have been shot by the attacking force, of course unintentionally.

While the house was burning some explosions were heard inside. These were alarming at first, but it was soon ascertained that they were cartridges burning. Several gun barrels were found in the debris, and also the burnt carcase of a dog which had been shot during the melee. All that was left standing of the hotel was

the lamp-post and the signboard.

The police suffered only one minor injury: Superintendent Francis Hare, the senior officer on the scene, received a slight wound to his wrist, then fled the battle. The Royal Commission then recommended that Superintendent Hare be allowed to retire from the force, as though he had attained the age of 55 years, and that, owing to the wound he sustained at Glenrowan, he receive an additional allowance of 100 per annum. Several hostages were also shot, two fatally.

The body of Joe Byrne was taken to Benalla and strung up as a curiosity for photographers and spectators. His body was not claimed by his family, and he was buried by police in an unmarked grave in Benalla Cemetery. Dan Kelly and Steve Hart were buried in unmarked graves by their families in Greta Cemetery east of Benalla.

Ned Kellys' Statements

I was going down to meet the special train with some of my mates, and intended to rake it with shot ; but it arrived before I expected, and I then returned to the hotel. I expected the train would go on, and I had the rails pulled up so that these ***** blacktrackers might be settled. I do not say what brought me to Glenrowan, but it seems much. Anyhow I could have have got away last night, for I got into the bush with my grey mare, and lay there all night. But I wanted to see the thing

end. In the first volley the police fired I was wounded on the left foot ; soon afterwards I was shot through the left arm. I got these wounds in front of the house. I do not care what people say about Sergeant Kennedy's death. I have made my statement of the affair, and if the public don't believe me I can't help it ; but I am satisfied it is not true that Scanlan was shot kneeling. He never got off his horse. I fired three or four shots from the front of Jones's hotel, but who I was firing at I do not know. I simply fired where I saw police. I escaped to the bush, and remained there overnight. I could have shot several constables if I liked. Two passed close to me. I could have shot them before they could shoot. I was a good distance away at one time, but came back. Why don't the police use bullets instead of duck shot? I have got one charge of duck-shot in my leg. One policeman who was firing at me was a splendid shot, but I do not know his name. I daresay I would have done well to have ridden away on my grey mare. The bullets that struck my armour felt like blows from a man's fist. I wanted to fire into the carriages, but the police started on us too quickly. I expected the police to come." Inspector Sadlier. You wanted, then, to kill the people in the train ?" Kelly. "Yes, of course I did ; God help them, but they would have got shot all the same. Would they not have tried to kill me?

The Battle of Glenrowan described by the man who shot Ned Kelly : Sgt Steele

"The hotel was surrounded by police and black trackers,

who kept up a continuous firing at the hotel building. It was a futile, as well as cruel, business, because the place was full of the Kellys' prisoners as anyone could tell by the awful screams. I stopped as much of the shooting as I could and did none myself except to let go a couple of revolver shots at two of the bushrangers who walked on to the verandah with their armor on and fired at the police. I knew about this armour, and it was that knowledge that was Ned Kelly's downfall."

"The firing went on all night. Some of the people from, the hotel did get away, but they had to run fearful risks of being shot by the police and trackers some of whom, crazy with excitement would have blazed away at anything they saw. There seemed to be no system, no organisation or direction about the attack. It was all fearfully bungled. A determined rush by a few trusty men would have settled the whole business. This was suggested but turned down because of the likelihood of lives being lost. There was not much chance of that. And anyway, it was war, and lives were being lost in the hotel - the lives of non-combatants. But the officer in charge had to have his way."

All that night I did little. I was waiting for Ned, principally. I wanted to make sure of him; and I had a kind of inspiration that I should see him before it was all over. "Now, as I told you, I knew about the armor that the outlaws were wearing that night -for the first and last time, and I knew that a bullet would have to be most correctly aimed to disable one of them. Anyone

who has shot in the dark knows how difficult it is to pick up the sights of a rifle, even with something light in front of the object aimed at. It might have been possible to have hit one of the outlaws in the head through the slot in the headpiece that they used to see through, but it would have been mighty uncertain at night with the man moving."

"I had thought all this over before, many a time. I one day remembered having read the story of how a notorious American outlaw, who for a long time had appeared to lead a charmed life, but eventually been shot dead by the brother of a man he had murdered, and who had used, not a rifle, but a double-barrelled gun, double loaded with buckshot. Also, I remembered reading somewhere that it was the practice to use shotguns and buckshot against train robbers in the States. "Buckshot is not known here. But the big leaden pellets known as "swan drops" are. And I laid in a stock of these. Oh the night of the battle, as I lay waiting for an opportunity to do something useful, that old gun that I have just put away - it was new then was lying by my side, well charged with the little bullets."

"It was dawn when a fresh outbreak of firing, accompanied by cries and shouts, announced some new development in the proceedings, the firing having for some time slackened down. Looking towards the house, I saw in the dim grey, light a spectral sort of figure that looked human, as to its clothes, but altogether inhuman as to its shape and general appearance. It came forward

slowly, peppered by all who saw it, and firing back from what appeared to be a big revolver, held tightly against the breast. Regarding not at all the heavy fire that was directed towards it from all quarters, the strange figure, enveloped in a huge overcoat, strode slowly on. "I had already recognised the unaccustomed sound of metallic impact of bullets upon iron, and whilst the men in front of me were yelling, "Look out! It's the devil!." "You can't kill it!" and things like that, I realised that at last my chance was coming. Because the big, weird figure was coming straight for me!"

"Was it fate!" I wondered. "Was this Ned, come to settle the affair of our vendetta in person?" "I will not deny that I got a bit excited, or that I felt a creepy feeling about the roots of my hair. It was a cold morning, and I was chilled with the long night of it, I know I shivered when I saw that ghostly apparition stand behind the lower part of a fallen tree, and quietly proceed to take pot shots at two or three of us with the queer-looking weapon that it carried. Once this weapon ran empty, and the spectre calmly reloaded it from the bag that was over its shoulders. Then it started to shoot again. I fired at the headpiece with my revolver, but the mark was small, and my hand was not quite steady, and I do not know if I hit the thing at all - certainly I did not hit the slit in the top of it that I aimed at But the man in the headpiece took no notice except to take steady aim at me and fire again. I felt the breath of the bullet. I tried another pistol shot, but just aimed at the main bulk of the figure. I heard the ball strike the iron

armour, and that was all. There were three or four shooting at the apparition, but with no effect at all, though it was close to us."

"Then, in the gathering daylight, I saw my chance. The tree trunk behind which Ned Kelly was standing [I was now certain that I had to do with that redoubtable chieftain himself] rose in a sloping fashion from the ground, and at its upper extremity left an open space beneath of about 2ft. "In the growing light of the dawn I noticed, beneath the tree trunk, the outlaw's legs. They were plainly visible, and unprotected by armour. "I win, Ned" was the fierce thought that surged through me as I raised the shot-gun, lying over on my left side to do it. "It was as though I had spoken aloud. For at that instant I heard the outlaw make an exclamation inside his great clumsy helmet, and when I put my fingers on the triggers of the gun he was taking a very careful aim at me." 'Would he disable me before I could fire?' This was the one thought I had. It all passed like lightning. Instinctively I rolled over a little - just as he fired and missed. Then, half raising myself, I fired the right barrel of my gun point blank under the log - straight at his legs. I heard him give an exclamation as though of pain, and waited a second to see if he would fall, But he stood firm, and leaning against the log for support, prepared to take aim again. "I fired the left barrel as quickly as I knew how, and prepared to dodge behind the tree on my left, and fight the matter out with my revolver. But there was no need. No sooner had the smoke of the gun cleared away than I saw the outlaw's pistol hand drop.

He staggered, and then, with a cry of "I'm done for!" that sounded strange and hollow in the cylindrical iron helmet, fell with a crash behind the stump. "Three or four rushed to him. I was the first to reach him, and to lift the helmet off. "So, I've got you at last, Ned" as his eyes met mine. "Yes; you've done for me" he moaned. "Don't let them hurt me!"

List of Victims Killed or Wounded by the Kelly Gang

Name	Injury	Date
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Constable Fitzpatrick	wounded	April 1878
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Sergeant Michael Kennedy	shot dead	26 October 1878
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Constable Scanlan	shot dead	26 October 1878
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Constable Lonigan	shot dead	26 October 1878
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Aaron Sherritt	shot dead	26 June 1880
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Martin Cherry	shot dead	28 June 1880
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John Jones (11yo)	shot (died)	29 June 1880
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C. C. Rawlins	wounded	28 June 1880
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Superintendent Hare	wounded	28 June 1880
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Martha Jones (14yo)	wounded	28 June 1880
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Total : six shot dead, four wounded.

The trial of Ned Kelly in the dock Ned Kelly survived to stand trial and was charged with the murder of Sergeant Kennedy, Constable Scanlan and Lonigan, the various bank robberies, the murder of Sherritt, and resistance to the police at Glenrowan, together with a long catalogue of minor charges. He was convicted of the willful murder of Constable Lonigan. He was then sentenced to death by hanging by Irish-born Lord Justice Redmond Barry. This case was extraordinary in that there were exchanges between the prisoner Kelly and the judge, and the case has been the subject of attention by historians and lawyers. When the judge uttered the customary words "May God have mercy on your soul", Kelly replied "I will go a little further than that, and say I will see you there when I go". At Ned's request, his photographic portrait was taken and he was granted farewell interviews with family members. His mother's last words to Ned were reported to be "Mind you die like a Kelly".

Ned Kelly was hanged on 11 November 1880 at the Melbourne Gaol. Kelly's gaol warden wrote in his diary that when Kelly was prompted to say his last words, the prisoner opened his mouth and mumbled something that he could not hear.

The Argus reported that Mr. Castieau, the governor of the gaol, informed the condemned man that the hour of execution had been fixed at ten o'clock. Kelly simply

replied "Such is life." His leg-irons were then struck off, and after a short time he was marched out by a number of warders, from the condemned cell on the old wing of the prison to the central building. He was very submissive on the way, and when passing through a portion of the gaol grounds laid out in flower beds, he remarked "what a nice little garden," but said nothing further until reaching the Press room, where he remained until the arrival of Dean Donaghy, chaplain of the gaol.

The Argus also then reported as Ned was at the gallows, that it was his intention to make a speech, but his courage evidently failed him, and he merely said, "Ah, well, I suppose it has come to this," as the rope was being placed round his neck.

Sir Redmond Barry died of the effects of a carbuncle on his neck on 23 November 1880, twelve days after Kelly.

Although the exact number is unknown, it is estimated that a petition to spare Kelly's life attracted over 30,000 signatures.

The Victorian Police had been told three times by informants of the existence of the armour and that it was capable of deflecting bullets but Police Superintendents Hare and Sadlier both dismissed the information as "nonsense" and "an impossibility". Despite these warnings, almost none of the police realized the gang were wearing armour until after the siege was over. Until Ned fell, the police even

questioned whether he was human. Constable Arthur, who was closest, thought he was a "huge blackfellow wrapped in a blanket", Constable Dowsett exclaimed it was "old Nick" and Senior Constable Kelly called out "Look out, boys, it's the bunyip. He's bullet-proof!" Constable Gascoigne, who recognised Ned's voice, told Superintendent Sadlier he had "fired at him point blank and hit him straight in the body. But there is no use firing at Ned Kelly; he can't be hurt". Although aware of the information supplied by the informant prior to the siege, Sadlier later wrote that even after Gascoigne's comment "no thought of armour" had occurred to him.

Following the siege of Glenrowan the media reported the events and use of armour around the world. The gang were admired in military circles and Arthur Conan Doyle commented on the gang's imagination and recommended similar armour for use by British infantry. The police announcement to the Australian public that the armour was made from ploughshares was ridiculed, disputed, and deemed impossible even by blacksmiths. [47]

some writers and commentators, commencing with Kenneally (1929), McQuilton (1979) and Jones (1995), perceived the Kelly Outbreak and the problems of Victoria's Land Selection Acts post-1860s as interlinked. McQuilton identified Kelly as the "social bandit" who was caught up in unresolved social contradictions that is, the selector-squatter conflicts over land and that Kelly gave the selectors the leadership they so lacked.

O'Brien (1999) identified a leaderless rural malaise in Northeastern Victoria as early as 1872-73, around land, policing and the Impounding Act.

Though the Kelly Gang was destroyed in 1880, for almost seven years a serious threat of a second outbreak existed because of major problems around land settlement and selection.

In the time since his execution, Ned Kelly has been mythologised among some into a Robin Hood, a political revolutionary and a figure of Irish Catholic and working-class resistance to the establishment and British colonial ties. It is claimed that Kelly's bank robberies were to fund the push for a "Republic of the North-East of Victoria", and that the police found a declaration of the republic in his pocket when he was captured, which has led to his being seen as an icon by some in the Australian republicanism cause.

What sort of person is smart enough to successfully evade the police for seven years, surviving in the Aussie outback like Crocodile Dundee, yet dumb enough, or crazy enough, to get himself into this situation in the first place? My guess would be someone with a high level of wilderness-smarts, and at the same time, a low

level of people-smarts, a low level of social-skills-smarts. Throughout history, many men have gotten themselves into trouble over attractive young women: government leaders, politicians, presidents, teachers, popes, generals, senators, workers, soldiers, police, fathers, married men, betrothed men, and more. It's a bit unusual that, in these situations, the young women end up dead or missing, but it does happen from time to time. If Naden had killed the first cousin, then arranged to secretly dispose of the body, why wouldn't he have done the same with the second cousin? Why flee? Why change the 'modus operandi'?

After, supposedly, killing the second cousin, he fled into the bush. If he had killed the first cousin, six months earlier, why was it that he didn't flee at that time? Because one crime was summertime, and one was wintertime? Why would that have made a difference? Was the ground frozen at the time of the second crime, making it overly-difficult to dig a secret grave?

If the grandfather [or grandmother] was also the grandparent of the cousins, then it would be highly unlikely that grandpa would have killed the victims. Grandparents usually treasure their grandchildren; They very rarely murder them. But what if Naden's grandpa was not also the grandpa of the cousins? What if the cousins came from the other side of Naden's family tree? It still would be quite unlikely that grandpa [or grandma] was the killer. But who knows? Malcolm Naden loved his grandpa. If grandpa was the one killing

young women, it's theoretically possible that Malcolm Naden would flee to 'protect' his grandpa ... to draw suspicion away from grandpa and onto himself; Or, that Malcolm found out about grandpa's dark secret and fled to save his own skin, fearing for his life, ... but at the same time, not wanting to turn grandpa in to the police.

Well, these are rather far-fetched scenarios, almost as unlikely as the theory that aliens from an alien spacecraft abducted the first cousin, then six months later, returned to kill the second one, and spooked Malcolm so badly that he ran off to hide in the bush for seven years, changing himself into a kangaroo from time to time to elude the police stake-outs.

It is difficult to compare apples and oranges, or plums and bananas. Almost all criminals have a propensity to flee justice. The more serious the crime, the more severe the punishment, and the more incentive there is for the criminal to run away and become a fugitive. Vastly different kinds of criminals can commit vastly different kinds of crimes, and yet end up in similar fugitive circumstances. Even criminals who commit the

same sorts of crimes might be motivated by widely different motives.

For example, one man [or woman] might kill a young woman victim in cold blood, to do away with evidence of a crime or a rape that has already been committed. Another might accidentally kill during the commission of a violent rape. A third might kill, then 'rape' the dead body [a necrophiliac]. A fourth might be in 'love' with the victim, and kill in a rage of jealous 'passion'. A fifth might kill because he is afraid of young women, afraid of everything that they represent to him ...afraid of sexuality, afraid of not being in control, afraid of displeasing his own mother somehow. A sixth might kill after unsuccessfully attempting intercourse or rape, blaming the victim for his own perceived inadequacies. A seventh might proceed under the delusion that women enjoy being raped, and then when the victim's response does not match the rapist's expectations, the rapist's delicate 'equilibrium' snaps, and he murder's his victim. The deviant human mind is quite complex; The possible motives are almost endless.

Who can understand why the 'Son of Sam' killed young women [and some men] in New York City during 1976 and 1977? Who knows why the 'Boston Strangler' killed young women in Boston during the early 1960s? Who knows who he [or she] even was?

Naden's motivations and crimes were quite different

from those of Captain Thunderbolt. Thunderbolt was a thief and a robber; Any women he might have injured were injured incidental to his thievery and robbery activities, or accidentally while he was attempting to flee justice. Thunderbolt was a 'married' man, with children.

Jimmy Blacksmith was also quite different from Naden. Blacksmith's victims were white, and Blacksmith was angered and offended by the treatment and scorn that he [and his wife, his people] had allegedly received from certain whites. Although Blacksmith himself was half-white, he could not help but be offended watching the Native-Australians being dispossessed and marginalized by immigrants from Europe and their white descendants. There was one similarity between Naden and Blacksmith though; They both allegedly raped at least one teenage girl.

It's a bit ironic that Ned Kelly is viewed by many people as a hero of an oppressed minority; His first robbery victim, a Chinese immigrant, was a member of an oppressed minority.

It's true that for many centuries, the Irish on the 'Emerald Isle' were oppressed by vikings, then later by Scottish and English overlords, but in Australia and New Zealand things were somewhat different. The Irish immigrants, a hard-working and feisty lot, did quite well on the new continent down-under. Compared with the

situation in the old country, opportunities for advancement and prosperity were quite abundant in the land of roo, koala, platypus, eucalypt and baobab. Most historians would agree though, that Ned Kelly, from an early age in life, along with others from his Irish-immigrant community, was somewhat victimized by an oppressive and abusive regional police force. Either that, or he was a very convincing teller of tall-tales of governmental abuse and arbitrary police action against him.

Some historians assert that Malcolm Naden's community was also victimized by an oppressive and abusive police force. But even if true, it's difficult to see how that would have had anything to do with the crimes that Malcolm Naden was charged with. According to the prosecutor, Naden's primary victims were young women and a teenage girl, all from his own community, apparently. The one who was killed and the one who vanished were actually members of his own family [cousins of his].

There are other differences between Ned Kelly and Malcolm Naden. Kelly's principal criminal activities were theft and robbery. Kelly's gang killed quite a few law enforcement officers, but killing cops was by no means his primary goal; The killings were mainly incidental to the Kelly gang's criminal lifestyle. Kelly was no loner; In fact, he was quite sociable and gregarious. Naden was a loner; At first, perhaps it was by choice, ...later, by necessity. Apparently, Naden was

not motivated by the desire to perpetrate thefts or robberies. His alleged problems were mainly 'women-related' problems and 'socialization' problems.

Other similarities between the two men include the following: Neither fugitive would hesitate to use firearms and violence to avoid capture, . . . both were at home in the bush, both knew how to live off the land.

CHAPTER EIGHT

[EPILOGUE]:

A 'tragic flaw' is a flaw in the character of the protagonist of a tragedy that brings the protagonist to ruin or sorrow.

Tragic Flaw is derived from the Greek word hamartia which is also translated in religious works (i.e. the Bible) as sin. The term comes from Aristotle's Poetics.

A tragic flaw, in literature is a series of actions the neither thoroughly good nor evil protagonist (often called the tragic hero) takes, that eventually bring him down in the end. The concept was created in ancient Greek tragedy. More often than not, the tragic flaw is hubris, such as in the works Antigone and Oedipus Rex. Another famous tragic hero is Shakespeare's King Lear. An example of a protagonist with a tragic flaw in modern literature would be Willy Loman in Death of a Salesman. A more subtle example would be the fictionalized Antonio Salieri in Peter Shaffer's Amadeus.

However, there is some debate in academic circles as to exactly what hamartia is, and what Aristotle meant by the word. The word literally means something like

"missing the mark", and it has been suggested by some that the modern idea of the "tragic flaw" is a mistranslation of the Greek. Some argue that a number of the Greek Tragedies (like Oedipus Rex) actually contain no clearly identifiable tragic flaws, but have been interpreted subjectively to fit Aristotle's theory. Regardless of what Aristotle actually meant, though, the term "tragic flaw" and the idea behind it are firmly ensconced within literary criticism.

Naden clearly had incredible bush-survival skills, which allowed him to continue to evade capture, and survive in the wilds for many years. Whether he had these skills when he first went on the lam, or whether he had only simple camping skills at first, but later developed extraordinary evasion and bush-survival skills, is debatable. Bush survival skills cannot really be viewed as a tragic flaw. He also had previously worked in a slaughterhouse, so knew to kill and prepare bush meat, and kangaroo, for consumption. Maybe vegetarians and animal lovers would view his animal-killing ability and animal-killing propensities as a tragic flaw.

Did he have a tragic flaw? Does he have a tragic flaw? Is he even guilty of the crimes that he has been charged with?

Only time will tell. Psychologists will undoubtedly argue that he was lacking in basic social skills, ... that his incredible shyness and isolation during the years before

2005 played a part in this 'tragedy'. And what sort of person preys upon and kills members of his own family [albeit cousins]? A family with family-members like that will greatly suffer. Naden certainly was no Robin Hood. Nor was he a 'swamp fox', like Colonel Francis Marion, a hero of the American Revolution who eluded capture in the Carolina swamps.

There is no doubt in my mind that one or more movies will eventually be made about Mr. Naden.

Let's pray that all people involved in this messy drawn-out tragedy someday find peace, understanding and forgiveness. The Bible teaches us that even the most hardened of criminals might someday, through repentance, find peace and forgiveness, and thereby avoid eternal damnation.